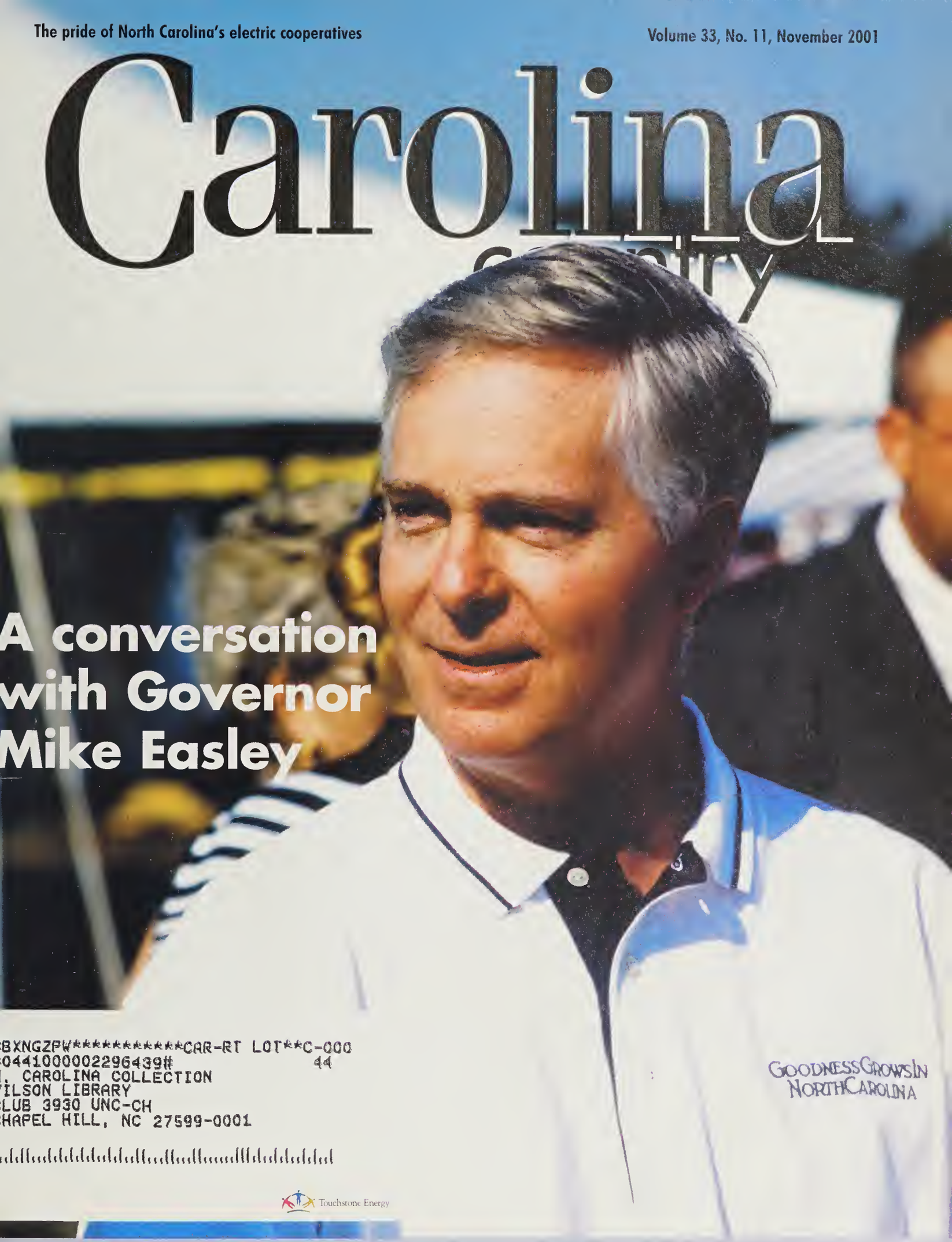
The pride of North Carolina's electric cooperatives

Volume 33, No. 11, November 2001

Carolina Country



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Contents

Volume 33, No. 11, November 2001

FEATURES

A CONVERSATION WITH THE GOVERNOR 16
Gov. Mike Easley discusses rural North Carolina, education, the economy, the electric utility industry and more.

THE BEST THING THAT EVER HAPPENED TO NORTH CAROLINA 20
The Wright Brothers, Blue Ridge Parkway, SmartStart, tobacco . . . and more of your ideas of the best.

THE CAROLINA COUNTRY COLLECTION 27-30
Our annual selection of holiday gift ideas made in Carolina country.

DEPARTMENTS

FIRST PERSON 8
Stumpy Point, Sept. 29 . . . Living our dreams . . . the November sky in North Wilkesboro . . . one day while picking blackberries.

MORE POWER TO YOU 12
Electric cooperatives and Sept. 11, 2001 . . . The industry on alert . . . What is a cooperative?

CAROLINA COMPASS 32
November events across the state.

MARKETPLACE 35-40
A showcase of goods and services.

JOYNER'S CORNER 39
What happens in November? And, what is the first sign of a bad memory?

ONLINE 41
Can you trust what you see on the Internet?

ENERGY CENTS 42
New electric and gelled-fuel fireplace kits.

HANK'S GARDENING GUIDE 44
About aloe vera.

CLASSIFIED ADS 45

CAROLINA KITCHEN 46
Turkey Sesame, Fried Sweet Potatoes, Festive Cranberry Salad.

On the Cover

Gov. Mike Easley at the Carolina Farm Show held in October at the Global Transpark, Kinston. Our conversation with him begins on page 16. (Photo by Duane Salstrand)

To America's heroes: thank you.

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The POWER of Human Connections

"We're all running to first class. I've got to go. Bye."

Phil Bradshaw recounted his wife's last words to him. Sandra Bradshaw, a flight attendant, called from her cell phone September 11, 2001, aboard United Airlines Flight 93. She told him that the plane had been hijacked and a group was determined to rush the hijackers and regain control. The plane soon crashed near Pittsburgh during what was meant to be a trip from Newark, N.J., to San Francisco. The couple was married 10 years and had two children, Alexandria age 2 and Nathan age 1. The family lives in Greensboro.

"One of last Tuesday's victims, in his final message to his family, said that he loved them and that he would see them again."

— First Lady Laura Bush, at a memorial service in Pennsylvania for the victims of United Flight 93.

North Carolina's Touchstone Energy cooperatives have established a fund that will be donated to the relief efforts helping the Sept. 11 victims, their families and the rescue operations that were involved.

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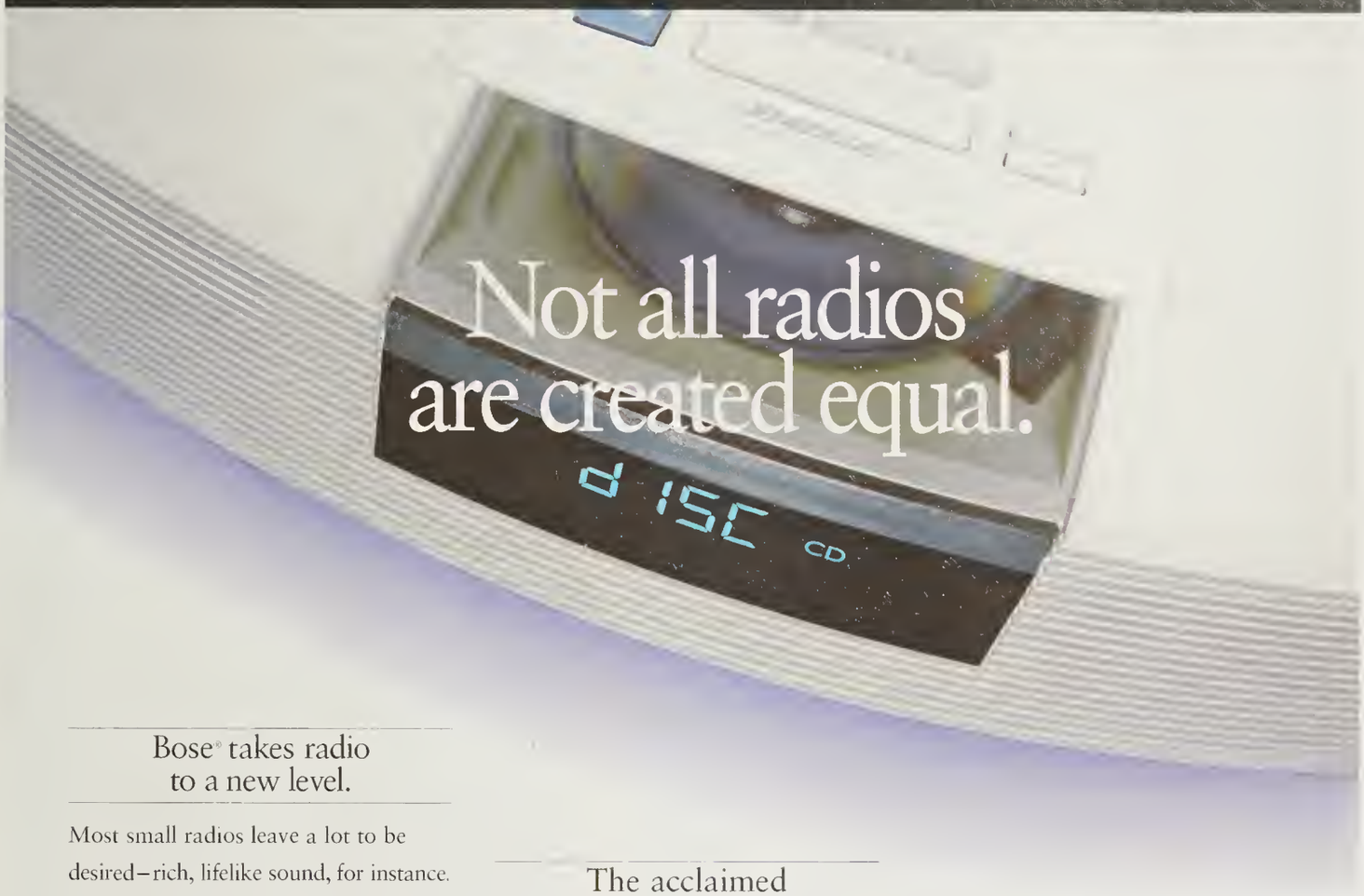

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AMAZING Grace

By Michael E.C. Gery

September 29, 2001
Stumpy Point, NC

I woke up again just now not knowing the time. My dream had placed me again in some not quite familiar rooms where nothing was in order. Phones didn't work, though a man tore frantically through the place trying to fix them. Lights didn't work. Somehow it was my fault again. People wandered in and settled in, waiting like ghosts for a meeting to begin, a meeting I had called. Why are we here? I wondered.

Rocking in the dark did not lull me back into sleep. My wife, Susan, jostled, too, dreaming something I couldn't know but wished I could.

So I am awake now. Outside, a chilled autumn breeze brings waves rippling across the bay to the shore, constant and deep as breathing in this still dark before dawn. The waves roll in and sigh, roll in and sigh, and I can't see them yet. The lamp lights this table. I can think straight. Here is fresh coffee and a good solid banana. I don't sense any terror.

My longtime friend Idoine called me yesterday from the hills where he lives to say how sad he is, how sad his wife is, and how he simply feels better these days when he talks to friends. We each sobbed quickly at the same moment, though we couldn't see each other, when we imagined the people aboard that plane over Pennsylvania September 11 and the one who called home to say, "We are taking over the plane. I love you all and will see you soon."

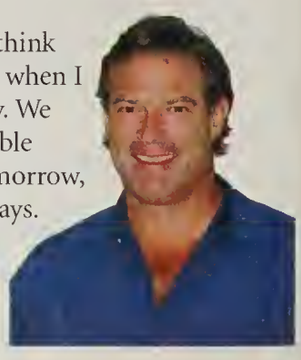
Gulls coo and wail over the bay now. A Stumpy Point fisherman slowly motors down the canal and into the bay, headed for Pamlico Sound to find fish for the rest of us. In the eastern sky now a faint pink opens behind two dark blue clouds that stand and spread their crowns as they rise like some still explosion. What has exploded over there?

I am just waiting for the morning, for the sun to warm things up around here, some light so we can see what's going on, get our bearings. Another Stumpy Point fisherman prowls by and heads into the sound. He knows the light will come soon, too. He'll be on familiar water under the open sky, though he wears extra clothing today, because it's not nice and warm as it was just a few weeks ago. It won't be nice and warm again for a while.

A few weeks ago, and back into the summer, we wondered as always if a big storm would crash into this place. It didn't come. No hurricanes attacked us this season. We didn't wait the day before with our gut grinding, wondering where it would strike and how hard. We didn't watch the gathering storm sky or hide from the steady then driving rain, from the low groaning and then high screaming unceasing wind, flooding tide, flailing tree limbs, lights out, shattering glass, crashing metal, the terror of the hurricane. We didn't see the destruction immediately after the storm. We didn't mop up, and look in on the neighbors and wait for the Tideland electric cooperative linemen to come round and restore our power. We didn't listen to the news of how bad it was.

But we knew that a storm could come at any time. We knew that an act of God could strike. We know that even better now. We've learned again that we can't predict the acts of God, only to expect them like we expect this glorious sun that's spread over me now bringing gleaming blue to the bay, opening daylight to the white terns who streak and shriek over the water, to the pelicans who patrol high in the morning sky. We've learned again to remain alert, to prepare and protect one another, to be thankful every day for the amazing grace that lends us personal freedom to speak and move around and help someone.

It's another day for me to think about all this. It's another day when I can love Susan and our family. We can look forward to comfortable times together in America tomorrow, the next day, during the holidays. We can look forward.



Michael E.C. Gery is editor of Carolina Country.

Living our dreams

My husband J.R. and I are approaching the first anniversary of our living in North Carolina. Oh, how I wish I had a giant thank-you card, so I could thank everyone who has made this year so special. People like our preacher, the folks in our church, our doctor, the lady mail carrier, and clerks in the stores, and all our wonderful friends and neighbors.

I was born 78 years ago in the beautiful state of Indiana. When I was a little girl, my aunt and uncle would bring me to the mountains of North Carolina on vacation. On the first trip I fell in love with these beautiful mountains. We would stand and look out as the clouds painted patchwork quilt blocks on the mountains or look down and see a tiny village below. My uncle would hold my hand and look at me with a smile on his face, and he would say, "Live your dreams, honey, live your dreams." Now I know he must have yearned to live in these beautiful mountains, but he had a big farm to run back in Indiana.

Well, I grew up got married and had a bunch of little girls. We would bring them to the mountains on vacation. Some loved it, others were not so fond. We had one little girl that would remark, "If you have seen one mountain, you have seen them all." I would look out and think, "What am I seeing that she is missing?"

Then it dawned on me. She is living her dream through a different eye. There were times when I would remark about a beautiful view. When our youngest daughter saw something pretty — mountains or otherwise — she would say, Is that a view, Mommie? Is that a view?"

I would say, "Yes, sweetheart, that's a view."

Those girls grew up and got married, but their daddy and I kept coming back to these mountains. One day we were sitting at a concrete picnic table on the Blue Ridge Parkway eating fried chicken when one of us said, "Let's move to North Carolina." To this day we can't remember which one said it. We went home, made our plans, told our girls. They all said, "Go for it." We came back, bought a little home in the Crabtree community of Haywood County, and let me tell you, we are just about as close to heaven as we can get with your feet still walking around on earth.

I promise I will not pollute your streams or litter your highways, I will obey your laws, and pay my taxes and be oh-so-proud to say I'm a North Carolinian. Because we're living our dreams.

Lois Snow
Clyde
Haywood EMC

Cowboy

This cowboy is Mason Pendergrass at 3 months old. His 10-year-old brother, Zachary, cannot wait until they can really play cowboys together.

Amy Pendergrass
Lexington
EnergyUnited

The young boy and the fish

My son, Cody, had been begging me to take him fishing. He had never been fishing.

One Saturday morning I took him to the pond, put a worm on his hook and cast it in the water. Not a minute went by before Cody began yelling, "I got one!" He reeled in a two-pound bass.

I took the fish off the hook and handed it to Cody. He wouldn't even touch the fish.

"Well, you're not much of a fisherman," I said.

Cody said he was sad for the fish and asked me to put it back in the water, which I did.

Chuck Saunders
Candor
Pee Dee Electric

November blaze

I took this last November from my back yard in North Wilkesboro. Sunsets are always a treat for the eyes. They allow even the worst of days to end in warmth and appreciation for God's many gifts of nature.

Rebecca Triplett-Johnson
North Wilkesboro

Where jelly comes from

I have two nephews who are 7 and 8 years old. They will be glad to tell you where jelly comes from. One day the 7-year-old nephew came up to me and asked, "Do you know where jelly comes from?" I said, "Where?" He then said, "Jellyfish."

The 8-year-old then told me you pick up the jellyfish and squeeze it to get out all the jelly.

Jenny Owens
Morganton

Concentration

My son, Brandt William Jutte-Prestridge, started watching the fishing shows on TV when he was about 3 years old. I took this picture of him at a small lake in Georgia when he was 4. His concentration is not always that keen. But he has no lack of focus when going after "the big one." He will be 16 years old this November, and his interest in fishing has not diminished.

Robert L. Juttekraus
Canton
Haywood EMC

One day while picking blackberries

This is a photo of where we lived at the time. It was taken six years ago and has since been torn down.

I was born 1939 in the beautiful mountains of North Carolina, 20 miles past Murphy. Our family was my parents, Willie and Jessie Baker, my sister Pauline, brother Lewis, and I was the youngest.

The summer I was 9 years old and Lewis was 14, Mom sent us off to pick blackberries way up in a cove at the foot of a big mountain. We took along our little dog who hunted anything. While we were pickin' berries, she got after something and ran it into a hole under a stump. Lewis so hoped it was a groundhog.

After we filled our buckets, we sat down to watch the dog. Lewis yelled, "Watch out!" But it was too late. A skunk ran out and sprayed us good, berries and all. Yep, that added a toppin' to Mom's blackberries. Mom wasn't too happy, because she had to clean us up.

We moved away in 1956. Pauline is now in Woodruff, South Carolina. Lewis is in Long Shoals, North Carolina. We get together twice a year in those beautiful mountains to visit Mom and Dad at Shady Grove cemetery in Murphy.

Alene Baker Leatherman
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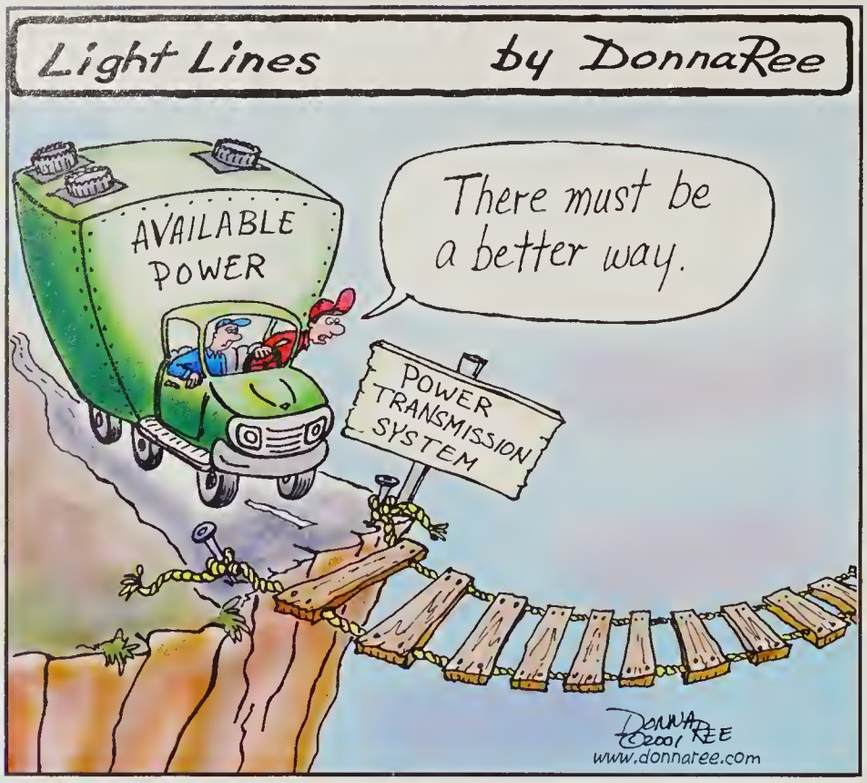

National panel will look at transmission and power line problems

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and the National Governors' Association form a blue-ribbon task force to study electric supply and transmission problems nationwide.

Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham said the task force will ferret out and eliminate "bottlenecks and choke points" plaguing the nation's electric system and will look at what was described as a "seriously out of date" electricity transmission system "made for the 20th century, but not ready for the 21st."

One of the task force issues will be to sort out the touchy issue of eminent domain. A proposal to federalize the process to fix electric transmission problems is part of Bush's energy policy. Such a process already exists for natural gas pipelines.

The governors of both parties are nervous about any proposal that gives the federal government the option to supersede states. The governors' proposal urged federal and electric industry officials to work on power issues in a way that does not intrude upon traditional state and local authority.

Sources: *Electricity Daily; Wall Street Journal*

What is a cooperative?

The Definition

Cooperatives worldwide generally operate using the same principles as adopted in 1995 by the International Cooperative Alliance. Each month, we'll feature one of the seven principles.

The principles are part of a cooperative statement of identity, which also includes the definition of a cooperative:

"A cooperative is an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly-owned and democratically-controlled enterprise."

North Carolina helps New York City and sister co-ops

North Carolina's electric cooperatives were among those nationwide who contributed to relief efforts that followed the Sept. 11 hijacker attacks in New York City.

On the day of the attacks, North Carolina Electric Membership Corporation (NCEMC), the power supply arm of the state's electric co-ops, immediately contacted 1st Rochdale Cooperative Group, the only energy co-op serving New York City. NCEMC provides back office services for 1st Rochdale, whose offices are located about 15 blocks from the World Trade Center site. All employees and business facilities were safe.

North Carolina's co-ops joined many others in contributing to the Cooperative Development Foundation's September 11 Relief Fund, Hatzolah Ambulance Service, and New York Police and Fire Widows' and Children's Benefit Fund. Hatzolah is a volunteer advanced paramedic ambulance corps serving New York City, including the cooperative housing community surrounding 1st Rochdale.

"As Americans, as New Yorkers, as cooperators — we are overwhelmed with gratitude to our sister co-ops across the country, who have stepped up to help New Yorkers rebuild in our hour of need," said Allen L. Thurgood, 1st Rochdale's chairman and CEO.

Chuck Terrill, NCEMC's executive vice president and CEO, pledged financial assistance from its Power of Human Connections Fund. "Manhattan's 1st Rochdale Cooperative Group contributed generously to our fund after so many of our employees and members were affected by Hurricane Floyd," said Terrill. "We all are well aware of the importance volunteer rescue squads play in the communities served by our own cooperatives. It seems appropriate that we come to the assistance of Hatzolah Ambulance Service, which serves such a vital role."

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The power of human connections

Electric utility industry remains on alert with heightened security

On Sept. 11, North Carolina's 27 electric cooperatives were on alert as a result of the attacks in New York and Washington, but no problems resulted to affect delivery of electricity to the 2.4 million people in the 93 North Carolina counties served by the co-ops.

North Carolina Electric Membership Corporation (NCEMC), the wholesale power cooperative owned by the state's co-ops, was in regular contact with its primary power suppliers, including CP&L and Duke Energy, among others. All were in a state of heightened security. NCEMC also owns 28 percent of Catawba Nuclear Plant in York, S.C., which is managed by Duke Energy.

"On behalf of the 2,500 employees of North Carolina's electric cooperatives, we express our deepest compassion to the victims and families of these tragedies, and our thoughts and prayers are with the emergency and rescue personnel involved in response and recovery," said Chuck Terrill, CEO of NCEMC.

The utility industry and the federal government have planned for many types of emergencies - including war and terrorism - that could affect the operation of the transmission grid and generating plants. The National Association of Electric Cooperatives has been involved for many years in developing these plans. "While these contingency plans do not specifically address the causes of incidents," said Glenn English, NRECA's CEO, "the plans do fully address the actions needed to address the likely results of many types of disturbances that can take place on the utility system."

In addition to the individual contingency plans by utilities, several branches of the federal government are involved in coordinating with the utility industry to ensure the safety of the electric utility system.

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has in place specific security and contingency plans as it relates to the safety of the nuclear generating plants in the country. These plants are currently under a heightened state of alert and many security actions have been instituted to restrict access to such plants and their associated property.

Nuclear power plant containment buildings are extremely robust structures and, in security terminology, are considered "hardened." While they cannot be guaranteed to be impermeable to every form of attack that can be imagined, they are designed and required by the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission to withstand hurricanes and airborne objects up to a certain force. Design requirements with respect to aircraft impacts are specific to each facility.

Containment buildings have walls of reinforced concrete that are up to four feet thick (typically thicker at base than at the top). Within the concrete are steel liners that are about one-half to one-inch thick.

Nuclear reactors are designed with a "defense-in-depth" safety strategy that requires three specific barriers to fail for a release of radioactivity to occur: 1) the fuel rods; 2) the reactor coolant system, including the reactor pressure vessel with walls of steel that range from nine inches to a foot in thickness; and 3) the containment structure.

With regard to the continued operation of the nationwide transmission grid, under existing plans and protocols, the Department of Energy (DOE) and FBI communicate daily with National Electric Reliability Council (NERC oversees the grid system) and the nation's 21 electric utility security coordinators to discuss and determine actions necessary to keep the lights on. During these communications, the DOE and FBI advise NERC and the security coordinators on specific levels of security and readiness that should be undertaken based on the intelligence information that they possess.

Got talent? Show it to "Carolina Calling"

North Carolina's Touchstone Energy electric cooperatives and Smith Productions of Charlotte are seeking talent for a 13-episode TV series that will run statewide next spring on UNC-TV. The "Carolina Calling" series will be a variety show that will spotlight native North Carolina music and talent.

"Carolina Calling" is interested in discovering new talent and will host five regional Touchstone Energy Carolina Calling Talent Searches. One was held in Wingate and another was scheduled for Hickory in October. The remaining talent searches will be held as follows. The shows begin at 7 p.m. and are free of charge.

Nov. 11	Memorial Hall, UNC-Chapel Hill
Dec. 6	West Carteret High School, Morehead City
Jan. 10	Bob Martin Agricultural Center, Williamston

All North Carolina residents are eligible. Entry blanks are available at all electric cooperative offices statewide and can be downloaded from the Carolina Country Web site at www.carolinacountry.com. All entries and an audio or videotape must be mailed to Smith Productions, P. O. Box 472341, Charlotte, NC 28247. For additional information, call Clay Smith (704) 366-9384.

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20	----	----	10.44	10.00	15.53	14.43	24.06	21.87
21	----	----	10.44	10.00	15.53	14.43	24.06	21.87
22	----	----	10.44	10.00	15.53	14.43	24.06	21.87
23	----	----	10.44	10.00	15.53	14.43	24.06	21.87
24	----	----	10.44	10.00	15.53	14.43	24.06	21.87
25	----	----	10.44	10.00	15.53	14.43	24.06	21.87
26	----	----	10.44	10.09	15.53	14.65	24.06	22.31
27	----	----	10.53	10.09	15.75	14.65	24.50	22.31
28	----	----	10.53	10.09	15.75	14.65	24.50	22.31
29	----	----	10.53	10.09	15.75	14.65	24.50	22.31
30	----	----	10.53	10.09	15.75	14.65	24.50	22.31
31	----	----	10.53	10.09	15.75	14.65	24.50	22.31
32	----	----	10.53	10.09	15.75	14.65	24.50	22.31
33	----	----	10.53	10.09	15.75	14.65	24.50	22.31
34	----	----	10.62	10.09	15.96	14.65	24.93	22.31
35	----	----	10.62	10.18	15.96	14.87	24.93	22.75
36	----	----	10.62	10.26	15.96	15.09	24.93	23.18
37	----	----	10.62	10.35	15.96	15.31	24.93	23.62
38	----	----	10.71	10.44	16.18	15.53	25.37	24.06
39	----	----	10.80	10.62	16.40	15.96	25.81	24.93
40	----	----	10.97	10.71	16.84	16.18	26.68	25.37
41	----	----	11.15	10.88	17.28	16.62	27.56	26.25
42	----	----	11.24	11.06	17.50	17.06	28.00	27.12
43	----	----	11.41	11.24	17.93	17.50	28.87	28.00
44	----	----	11.59	11.41	18.37	17.93	29.75	28.87
45	----	----	11.94	11.59	19.25	18.37	31.50	29.75

Call for more information

MONTHLY RATES

Issue Age	$50,000 Male	$50,000 Female	$101,000 Male	$101,000 Female	$250,000 Male	$250,000 Female	$500,000 Male	$500,000 Female
46	----	----	12.30	11.86	20.12	19.03	33.25	31.06
47	----	----	12.83	12.12	21.43	19.68	35.87	32.37
48	----	----	13.36	12.39	22.75	20.34	38.50	33.68
49	----	----	13.98	12.74	24.28	21.21	41.56	35.43
50	----	----	14.60	13.00	25.81	21.87	44.62	36.75
51	----	----	15.30	13.36	27.56	22.75	48.12	38.50
52	----	----	15.92	13.71	29.09	23.62	51.18	40.25
53	----	----	16.63	14.07	30.84	24.50	54.68	42.00
54	----	----	17.42	14.60	32.81	25.81	58.62	44.62
55	----	----	18.40	15.13	35.21	27.12	63.43	47.25
56	----	----	19.37	15.74	37.62	28.65	68.25	50.31
57	----	----	20.52	16.36	40.46	30.18	73.93	53.37
58	----	----	21.75	17.07	43.53	31.93	80.06	56.87
59	----	----	23.34	17.95	47.46	34.12	87.93	61.25
60	----	----	25.47	19.10	52.71	36.96	98.43	66.93
61	----	----	28.12	20.25	59.28	39.81	111.56	72.62
62	----	----	31.03	21.58	66.50	43.09	126.00	79.18
63	----	----	34.39	23.08	74.81	46.81	142.62	86.62
64	----	----	38.19	24.94	84.21	51.40	161.43	95.81
65	----	----	42.43	27.50	94.71	57.75	182.43	108.50

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photos by Duane Salstrand

A Conversation With the Governor

Gov. Mike Easley discusses rural North Carolina, education, the economy, the electric utility industry and more

When Mike Easley began his campaign for Governor of North Carolina, he said, "I want to guarantee that the working men and women of this state — the people who get up early, fight traffic, do the dishes and pay the bills— have a champion in Raleigh. I am running for Governor to make sure that North Carolina grows and that, as changes occur around us, our working families get a fair shake in the process and a fair share of the prosperity that comes our way. Every region and every citizen of North Carolina must be included."

Last summer, midway through his first year as Governor, Carolina Country visited Gov. Easley at the State Capitol. We were interested in how he expects to honor the campaign pledge, especially on issues affecting rural North Carolina, as well as rural cooperatives and the changing electric utility business. Portions of that interview appear on these pages. The complete text is on our Web site at www.carolinacountry.com.

— Michael E.C. Gery

Contact the Governor

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20301 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-0301

Phone
(800) 662-7952 *valid in North Carolina only*
(919) 733-4240 or (919) 733-5811

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E-mail (though the Web site)
www.governor.state.nc.us

Born in Nash County, just outside Rocky Mount, Michael F. Easley was the second of seven children raised on a tobacco and chicken farm by Huldah and Alex Easley. After graduating from Rocky Mount High School in 1968, Easley received his B.A. in political science from the University of North Carolina and earned his law degree from North Carolina Central University School of Law in 1976.

He was elected district attorney for Bladen, Brunswick and Columbus counties in 1982 when he was 31. As one of the state's youngest district attorneys, he gained a reputation for countering drug trafficking and public corruption, as well as for protecting victims. When he was elected North Carolina attorney general in 1992, he recorded the highest-ever vote total in state history. As attorney general he became known for pursuing consumer fraud, stiffening criminal punishment, enhancing law enforcement tools, defending victims and negotiating with hog farmers to improve environmental technology. He was recognized for heading efforts to reach a national tobacco settlement that resulted in the largest financial recovery in state history, intended to stabilize the tobacco industry.

Mike Easley is an avid hunter and sailor, and an accomplished woodworker. His wife, Mary, is a professor of law at N.C. Central University. Their son, Michael Jr., 17, served this year as a Congressional page in Rep. Bob Etheridge's office. They have a home in Southport.

You hear a lot about the problems facing rural North Carolina today, but we hear from our readers and the people in the electric cooperatives about how much they enjoy living in the country and what they have learned by just being there. If you look at the country from one end of the state to the next, it's got a lot going for it, don't you think?

The state is beautiful. I was in Asheville this weekend and I was thinking of the Great Smokies. And my home in Southport is right there where the Cape Fear meets the Atlantic Ocean. I flew out of there — that's Brunswick Electric Membership's area — and up to Asheville and back, seeing so much terrain, the Piedmont, foothills. It's beautiful. There is so much potential for North Carolina to grow and prosper, not just in the urban areas.

Of the 100 counties, 89 are rural. What we've done is under-invested in rural North Carolina. We have to make those investments in order to have what I call "one North Carolina." We're developing two, a rich metropolitan one and a poor rural one. And the opportunities are there. They say nobody likes change but a wet baby, but we're churning through a lot of low-paying jobs and we're losing some of our manufacturing jobs. But we're going to replace it with something that is better and improves the standard of living.

Where are we seeing those improvements for rural North Carolina?

We have to have equity in education. To improve education in North Carolina, we have to do several things statewide. This fall we begin a pre-K program for at-risk 4-year-olds. Our kindergarten classes next year will all have 18 or fewer students and we are going to expand that to grades 1 through 3 over the next few years. That will help these rural areas. We must also continue to invest in our university and community college system. I want to devise a system where everyone can learn as much as they want for as long as they want — from the high chair to the rocking chair.

What kind of "country boy" is there in Mike Easley?

It's really interesting watching my son grow up. Even when our family lived in Southport, it wasn't quite like the farm that I grew up on in Nash County. We are now in Raleigh, and he just missed all that. So I started writing farm stories for him to read, so he can see what it was like. When I'm on the road, or late at night, I'll write out and type out some of the things I remember from growing up.

Where was the Easley farm in Nash County?

Out past Benvenue School on Highway 48, toward Gold Rock, before you get to I-95. We had 63 acres, a stick barn for tobacco. The farmer next to us would put in maybe two days a week at our farm, then two at their farm, then two at some other farm. We'd share labor.

We had 1,800 chickens. There were seven of us. But the four girls didn't have to do anything! The three boys had to do all the work! We'd get eggs, wash and grade them, pack them each night, and Papa would take them to market. And back then, there were no big brands like you get nowadays. Every little farm had their own cartons.

I worked tobacco 'til I got a driver's license. Actually, that's not true, we had a tobacco warehouse — the Easley Warehouse in Rocky Mount — and I learned the grades down there. I started off handing when I was a little kid, then you go to trucking behind the mule, then you get so they let you drive the tractor. And then you get up to the point that you're priming — some parts of the state call it cropping, we call it priming here. I think priming I earned $6 a day.

And then I would go to the warehouse. This was before they had the stabilization, so the tobacco farmer was dependent upon the warehouseman to set the price and stick with it. I remember seeing my granddad buy up the whole floor of tobacco if he didn't think the company was paying enough. And I did a little, of course, speculating, or pin-hooking. The thing that I would do is save up a little money and buy a pile of tobacco that didn't bring enough because it had maybe a little too much green in it. I'd take the green out and put it back at fewer pounds but higher quality, and make a little money on it. And so I learned the grades. After I got out of high school and into college, I got jobs with companies down in South Georgia.

Learning the grades helped me. I was able to make $200 a week back in '69 through '72. Paid my way through school.

(continued on page 18)

You were instrumental in forging the recent "tobacco settlement." How has it affected rural North Carolina and what more can we expect from it?

As part of the settlement, I established the Golden L.E.A.F. [Long-term Economic Assistance Foundation]. The purpose for this foundation is to invest in tobacco-dependent communities. The foundation has already made their first round of grants, and I am hopeful that this revitalization fund will help transition tobacco communities into the new economy. I believe the Golden Leaf is going to have close to $100 million a year coming into it. It's building now. If we can use that money properly to create options and have the state make the investments it needs to make, then we can see water, sewer, natural gas, Internet access, all those items that we need in order to progress.

The Corporation of Economic Development that rates the state rated us, I believe, A in 1997, A in 1998, dropped us to C in 1999 citing lagging rural economies and D in 2000 citing again lagging rural economies.

So we have the natural gas expansion program. We could do the same thing with Internet access. Then the great thing about technology is that it lets people live where they want to instead of where they have to. I hope that will bring back a sense of community.

Could you pick a Golden Leaf project that is an especially good example of what the foundation can do?

There's a county down east — a tobacco-dependent community — that wants to expand their hospital, but they don't have the money in reserve. The county's poor, they don't have the money in reserve to qualify to borrow the money from the state or with the state's blessing because they have to have the rating. The Golden Leaf could go in and guarantee the loan because the hospital is making money, and therefore the expansion could be made. Without rural health care, you do not have rural economic development. That's something that people have to understand.

I'd like to see them take advantage of the biotechnology that is already in existence. We'll be growing more tobacco for non-smoking purposes in the next ten years. We know we can already extract the enzymes out of corn, soybeans, potatoes. We also know that within three years we can be doing that with tobacco. It's truly a magical weed. It raises the price and increases the demand. So, I think that the agricultural community will be enhanced by technology, not replaced by it. I'd like to see Golden Leaf investing in those, trying to move them along a little faster.

We're looking at ethanol plants in Martin, Onslow, Pender and several other counties. They have to have a supply of liquid natural gas — they could get it from the LNG terminal that they're putting over at Radio Island.

Do you see that Internet access issue on a fairly fast track right now?

I wouldn't want to put a time line on it, but I've said that we're moving in that direction very rapidly. That's a question that is asked by industry when you try to recruit. Forty percent of them won't come to a county that doesn't have natural gas, and you've got the same issue with Internet access.

When we go to Southport, we have to dial in and it's $6 for the day. Add that up over a year's time. It becomes a competitive disadvantage over somebody in Raleigh, Greensboro or Charlotte. So it's important that we get not only access, but the broadband capability, too. And it may come through satellite in most of our rural areas.

The state's electric cooperatives and the other utilities are looking at a changing business environment. Government regulation is being lifted from the marketplace, and competition is being introduced. Do you see the co-ops playing a role in how this restructuring takes place here in North Carolina?

The co-ops are in almost every county. They will be a player. I see the co-ops as being involved to the extent that they want to be.

Deregulation is another topic. We have to be very cautious right now. I think competition can lower the price substantially, as it has in so many areas of our lives that people never anticipated, but we have to make sure that

we do this the right way.

The more suppliers you have, the more competition you have, the greater likelihood that the price would drop and the supply increase, which is extremely important. Right now, the supply is critical for industrial recruiting. I was trying to be sensitive to that when I tried to make positive appointments to the state Utilities Commission.

If we deregulate, we should deregulate properly and cautiously. Because if you don't have the supply of power in place — especially the projected amount that you need in a state growing as rapidly as North Carolina — and pretty much guarantee that it's going to be there, then you put yourself behind the eight-ball like California did. And it is really hard to get out.

But no deregulation plan can succeed if it ignores the historically vital role that cooperatives have played and should continue to play in bringing electricity to underserved customers in rural areas. The co-ops have long served as 'honest brokers' and 'watchdogs' in setting benchmarks we use to judge their for-profit competitors and no restructuring plan should undermine this significant role.

Will North Carolina be affected by the power shortage and high energy bills that faced western states?

North Carolinians should not experience the power shortages and high energy bills that have plagued California and other western states. North Carolina's Utilities Commission oversees the pricing and other practices of our investor-owned utilities, and has worked to ensure that overall supply in our state always exceeds demand. Our state is fortunate to have an adequate power supply with sufficient reserves and the foresight to ensure that we will have necessary supplies to meet our needs in the future.

The cooperatives, of course, already have strong oversight by their local boards in setting their rates and operating policies.

What do you feel is a reasonable time frame for North Carolina to follow toward opening the electric service market to customer choice at the retail level?

There is some restructuring occurring already, with utility company mergers and the formation of regional transmission organizations. We need to see how these developments affect competition and customer choice in North Carolina's retail market. Many states have set specific dates for starting retail competition, and several of those states have now postponed those target dates.

Before moving ahead, we must be able to guarantee effective competition among a large number of wholesale suppliers so that our supply of electricity remains strong and prices remain at reasonable levels. The point is to lower electric costs — not to raise them. One thing we know for certain — the consequences of a poor plan can be devastating. We must learn from the experiences of others.

In crafting a restructured electric service business, how can the state help balance the requirements of large businesses with those of residential customers?

Retail choice will not work unless all consumers — industrial, commercial and residential — have reliable and reasonably priced choices in obtaining their electric power. Likewise, the transmission system must be open and fairly priced for use by all suppliers. At the end of the day, the public will not support changes to the current system unless they have confidence that the changes will maintain reliable service and lower costs for everyone.

The cooperatives have found that there are other utility services that they naturally have been able to fit into, especially in the areas where they haven't been extended before. That seems to be an avenue where co-ops are filling a need.

Four County EMC in Bladen, Sampson, Duplin, Pender. They got into propane. I remember, because we had to write an opinion on that.

The co-ops are very well respected and trusted by their memberships. They are a tremendous source of reliable delivery of whatever service they're providing. And that network being in place is a real positive reserve for the people of this state in many areas beyond electricity. I think you will see a lot of public support for the co-ops participating in the delivery of most any service, whether it be electricity or another. It's the credibility of the co-ops that makes the difference.

> It's the credibility of the co-ops that makes the difference.

It's not just that they are trusted. It's that sense of community that we seem to have lost in this high-tech society, where we sleep in our communities but we don't really live there anymore. And the co-op brings back that sense of community. I know when I went to speak to the co-ops annual meeting a few years ago, I looked out and saw people from all across North Carolina. They are politically plugged in. They're politically active.

They have a real sense of community, and they're very civic minded. That's the foundation of the co-op. I believe that's why they have the support of the public. It's so much of our culture in North Carolina, especially in rural North Carolina. Those of us who grew up in that area, we know where we got our service, our electricity. And we know they cared about us, and we know who we can trust in the long run.

The Best Thing That Ever Happened to North Carolina

What was the best thing to happen to North Carolina? If we had to come up with a tally from the entries you sent us, the most votes would go to the Wright Brothers flight, "The Andy Griffith Show," rural electrification, Jesse Helms, your children and your parents. Close seconds were Michael Jordan and the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse. I wish we had space to publish more than you see on these pages, because there sure were interesting candidates and all with good reason: the First Citizens Bank in Dunn, the birth of Thelonius Monk in Rocky Mount and John Coltrane in Hamlet, the contribution W.F. Caudle made to electrification and the communities of Randolph County, moving the state capital from the eastern part of the state to Raleigh, Shamrock Community Skate Park, among many others.

Thank you to everyone who wrote to us. Next month we'll run selections of your stories and pictures about "The Finest Person in My Life." (Deadline was Oct. 15.) If you know a student who can draw, get him or her to send us a picture of your electric co-op at work (deadline is Nov. 15). We'll run them in January. For the themes in coming months, see page 22.

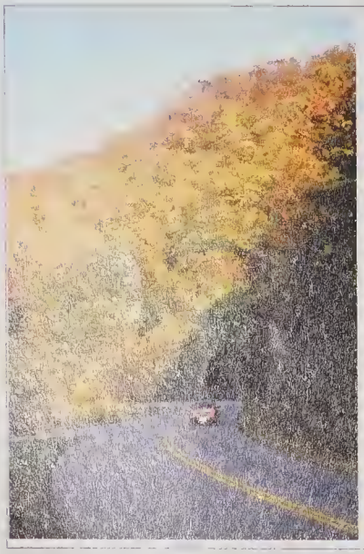
— Michael E.C. Gery

Smart Start

The early intervention program, Smart Start, initiated by our previous governor James Hunt, is designed to give the young children of this state a great start physically and mentally. The vision of this program is for all children to enter school at their maximum potential. Smart Start programs include services such as hearing and eye exams, dental care, educational training for daycare teachers and library programs with free book giveaways, just to name a few. Even though services are not available in every county, it is my hope in the near future they will be.

As a Smart Start employee, I have seen the magic of the program firsthand. Every day in North Carolina we are improving the lives of our children. What better investment could we have chosen to make?

Wanda Lee
Fay
South River EMC



The Blue Ridge Parkway

In the mid-1930s, the Roosevelt Administration's Civilian Conservation Corps began building one of the most scenic roads in America — the Blue Ridge Parkway. The Parkway was designed for motorists and was intended to link the Shenandoah and Great Smoky Mountains National Park. The Parkway now serves as a tourist site for many campers, backpackers and people just out for a drive. Since it extends from the southernmost end of North Carolina to the northernmost part of Virginia, it also serves as a connecting roadway to get people from one place to another.

The Parkway is home to gorgeous trees and animals, and the view is spectacular from every angle. The mountains are seen all around. It is the best thing to happen to North Carolina, because it is beautiful and productive in every way.

Brittany Holleran
Charlotte

Different cultures

We are fortunate to have so many ideas from different cultures coming together in our state.

Native Americans left their mark on the early explorers. Unfortunately, marks were also left on them. Many people are finding a new respect for the cultures of our native peoples. European settlers to the area were primarily Irish, Scottish, English and German. They introduced their own ways. African-Americans have also made an impact on our state, and their drive for respect must continue. Recently, Hispanics have been moving into the state. I can only hope that we will welcome them.

Many Americans refer to our "southern hospitality." The people in North Carolina are always willing to help others and make visitors feel welcome.

Almost every state has a "melting pot." Many children here still grow up with older ideas, such as respect for others. In a constantly changing world, we are still able to hold onto our ideals. That is definitely something that can make us proud.

Jody Crane
Glen Alpine
Rutherford EMC

Tobacco

North Carolina came into the Union with a great advantage. It already had magnificent mountains and a long sandy beach that was, and is, very enticing to tourists. Nature provided a very profitable and beautiful economic benefit for North Carolina. When the settlers came over and brought the tobacco seed with them, they brought another economic benefit with them. They had no idea the impact it would have on the great state of North Carolina.

When tobacco was first introduced, there were no known health risks. Tobacco was grown here and put bread on many tables in North Carolina. It gave many people a way of life that they could never have realized any other way.

The Bull City, Durham, N. C., would not have been the city that it is today if it were not for tobacco. It had many tobacco warehouses and much of the population there was dependent upon tobacco, in some form, for their livelihood. Tobacco money also built one of the best learning hospitals in the U. S. Duke Hospital has been responsible for saving many lives and improving the lives of many more.

Through education, we have learned that tobacco is not good for our health. Tobacco has taken many blows and cuts the past few years. Many tobacco farmers have been forced out of business and the quantity of tobacco grown in N. C. has been drastically reduced. It is not the King that it once was, but it was King at one time and was one of the biggest contributors to the economy. Even with its many faults, tobacco was one of the best things that ever happened to North Carolina.

Carolyn Pittard
Oxford
Piedmont EMC

The Wright Brothers flight

The best thing that happened to North Carolina was when the Wright Brothers flew the first airplane on Dec. 14, 1903, for a distance of 120 feet, for a full 12 seconds.

Edgar Dancy
Battlesboro

Electricity

I remember as a small child those old lamps burning kerosene, the old lanterns and the flatirons and the old Home Comfort stove. We also had to take wood into the house to cook and keep warm. Summer brought hot weather, no air conditioners, screen doors and hand fans so you could fan yourself to sleep. We bought ice at an ice and coal store 11 miles away, and my daddy kept it wrapped in burlap down in the ground about knee deep.

The best thing to happen in North Carolina in my life was electricity. I know that changed everyone's living to enjoy the fruits of our labor much more. Everything looked better in your house. From the good old days of early lighting of rural electricity to now in 2001 – "Wow Wee!"

What a wonderful world with electricity. Some parts of the world do not even have it. The best thing your money can buy is electricity.

Janie Harris
Williamston
Edgecombe-Martin County EMC

The Andy Griffith Show

The fun-loving, kind-hearted, honest Sheriff Taylor and his friends of "The Andy Griffith Show" demonstrate the lifestyle found in the rural communities of our state.

Andy Griffith himself has been instrumental in bringing the film industry to North Carolina and in promoting the arts in many communities.

Every time that familiar whistle announces the show, North Carolina is receiving a half-hour of free advertising. "Mayberry" has created a yearning in many a heart for the way of life many of us enjoy. I am glad that Andy and all his lovable characters are living happily every after in reruns.

Janice Glover
Denton
EnergyUnited

Send us your best. Earn $50.

Here are the themes in our "Nothing Could Be Finer" series. Send us your stories and pictures. You don't have to be the best writer. Just tell it from your heart.

January 2002
"Best Student Drawing of an Electric Co-op at Work."
Send drawing, and a photo of the student if possible.
Deadline: Nov. 15

February 2002
"Best Advice for Young Parents"
Words of wisdom for parents of young children.
Deadline: Dec. 15

March 2002
"Best Garden I Ever Saw."
Send advice and photos if possible.
Deadline: Jan. 15

April 2002
"Best North Carolina Vacation I Ever Had."
Where, why and send pictures.
Deadline: Feb. 15

May 2002
"Why I Like Living in the Country."
Tell us where and what's good about it.
Deadline: March 15

June 2002
"The Funniest Story I Ever Heard"
True or not so true.
Deadline: April 15

July 2002
"How to Survive a Storm."
Your advice and memories about storms.
Deadline: May 15

August 2002
"My Funniest Pet Story."
Send pictures, too.
Deadline: June 15

September 2002
"My Favorite Photo."
Our annual photo gallery.
Deadline: July 15

October 2002
"How I Learned to Drive."
How good was the teacher, really?
Deadline: August 15

November 2002
"The Dumbest Thing I Ever Did."
And the lesson you learned afterwards.
Deadline: Sept. 15

December 2002
"Advice for Getting Older."
How can we age gracefully?
Deadline: Oct. 15

The Rules

1. Approximately 200 words or less.
2. Only one entry per household per month.
3. Photos are welcome. Digital photos must be 300 dpi and actual size.
4. E-mail or typed, if possible. Otherwise, make it legible.
5. Include your name, electric co-op, mailing address and phone number.
6. If you want your entry returned, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. (We will not return others.)
7. We pay $50 for each submission published.
8. We will post on our Web site more entries than we publish, but can't pay for those submissions. (Let us know if you don't agree to this.)
9. Send to Nothing Finer, Carolina Country, 3400 Sumner Blvd., Raleigh, NC 27616. Or by e-mail: carolinacountry@ncemcs.com. Or through the Web site: www.carolinacountry.com

A guide to North Carolina

Christmas Trees

Christmas trees are one of North Carolina's major agricultural crops. Tar Heel growers this year will harvest more than 3.7 million trees, worth some $92 million. The state Department of Agriculture reports that North Carolina produces over 12 percent of the real Christmas trees in the United States. More than 1,600 growers produce trees on about 23,530 acres.

Ashe, Avery, Alleghany, Watauga and Jackson counties produce 88 percent of North Carolina's Christmas trees.

photo courtesy of N.C. Division of Tourism

"Choose and cut" Christmas trees represent approximately 25 percent of all trees sold in North Carolina. More than 400 growers open their fields and hillsides to visitors who want to take home their own tree.

To find a "choose and cut" farm near you, look at the North Carolina Choose and Cut Directory Web site at www.ncagr.com/markets/commodit/horticul/xmastree/gyde.htm

For a free guide to "choose and cut" farms, contact:

N.C. Department of Agriculture
Southeast Marketing Center
P.O. Box 974
Roseboro, NC 28382
Phone: (910) 525-3444
Fax: (910) 525-3299
E-mail: laurie.wood@ncmail.net

Mail Order Trees and Wreaths

The following members of the N.C. Christmas Tree Association can fill mail orders for trees and wreaths.

JAMES AND DAWN BRADLEY
Rainbow Sky Nursery
248 Clyde Cornett Rd.
Vilas, NC 28692
704 297-1772
800 209-8137
Wreaths: Fraser Fir 10" & 12" rings

JOHN W. BENTLEY
City Limit Trees
3400 Campbell Rd.
Raleigh, NC 27606
919-851-0267
919-372-6188
Trees: Fraser Fir 4'-10'
Wreaths: Fraser Fir
Roping: White Pine

DAN BOYD
Boyd Mtn.
Christmas Tree Farm
Rt. 2, Box 167 -
Boyd Farm Rd.
Waynesville, NC 28786
828-926-1575
Trees: Fraser Fir 5'-7'

SAM CARTNER
Cartner's Blue Ridge Fraser Fir
One Balsam Dr. - Mt. Glen
Newland, NC 28657
704-733-2391
Trees: Fraser Fir
Roping: Fraser Fir

HOWARD E. COVINGTON
Covington Tree Farm
633 Covington Rd.
Laurel Springs, NC 28644
910-982-3872
Fax 910-982-9829
Trees: Fraser Fir

DIANE CORNETT DEAL
Cornett Deal Christmas Tree Farm
PO Box 1604
Boone, NC 28607
704-297-1136
Wreaths: Decorated

JOHNNY R. GREER
What Fir!
Ray Brown Rd.
Boone, NC 28607
704-264-2996
Wreaths: 24"

MORRIS W. HADDOCK
Haddock Tree Farm
Rt. 1, Box 203-A
Hot Springs, NC 28743
704-622-7480

DAVID HARMON
Harmon Farms
183 Ira Harmon Rd.
Vilas, NC 28692
704-297-4793/ fax-same
Trees: Fraser Fir
Wreaths: Fraser Fir
Roping: Fraser Fir

LAUREL SPRINGS CHRISTMAS TREE
Selling Wholesale Only
Hwy. 18 South - PO Box 85
Laurel Springs, NC 28644
800-851-2345
Trees: Fraser Fir, White Pine
Wreaths: Fraser fir, White Pine & Boxwood
Roping: Fraser Fir, White Pine & Mixed greenery

ANNIE & CHAN PIPES
Laurel Creek Nursery
477 Mountain Springs
Sugar Grove, NC 28679
704-963-6131 / 704 297-4561
Fax: 704-297-4961
Trees: Fraser Fir 5'-7'
Wreaths: Fraser Fir and/or White Pine
Roping: Fraser Fir and/or White Pine

T.E. SMITH
T.E. Smith Christmas Tree Farm
Rt. 4, Box 652
Banner Elk, NC 28604
704-898-9574
Trees: Fraser Fir 7'-9'

WILLIAM P. STANTON
Pop-N-Son Christmas Trees
1201 Flanders St.
Garner, NC 27529
919-772-0467
Wreaths: Fraser Fir and White Pine
Roping: White Pine

CLAY & MARY TOWNSEND
Townsend Tree Farm
7237 Idlewild Rd.
Fleetwood, NC 28626
910-877-3071
Wreaths: Fraser Fir
Roping: Fraser Fir

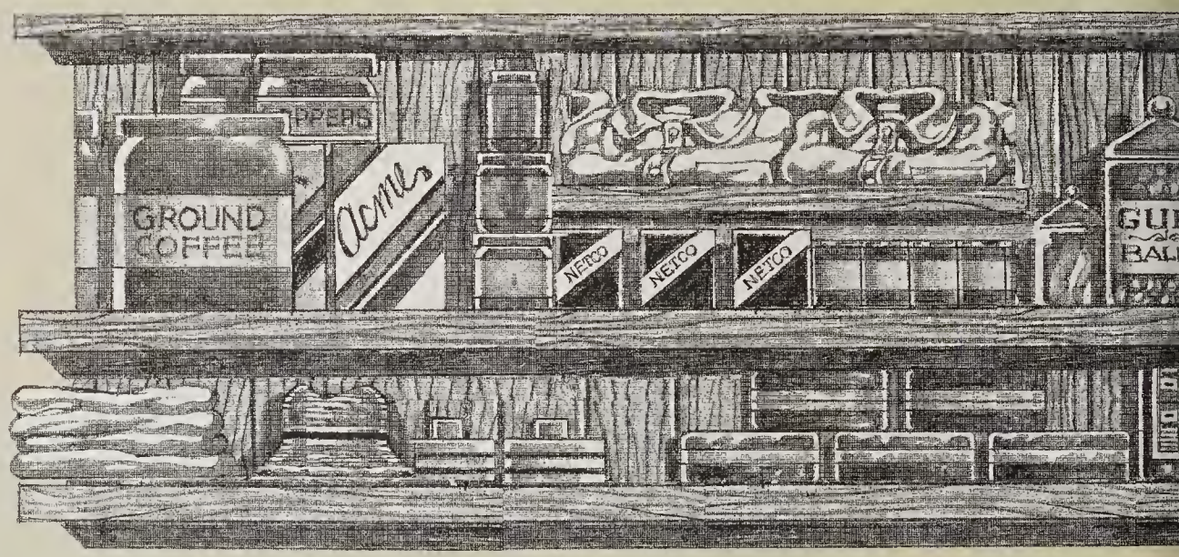
LEON S. WILLIAMS
K&W Christmas Tree Farm
Rt. 3, Box 135-B
Warrenton, NC 27589
919-257-2397
Trees: White Pine

BILL SMITH
Top of the Mountain
PO Box 30
Glendale Springs, NC 28629
336-982-3507
Fax: 336-982-3506
www.topofthemtnchristmastrees.com
Trees: Fraser Fir 6 - 10 feet.
Wreaths

On Sunday mornings my Grandpa used to drive his truck slowly down the road picking up country folks along the roadside for a ride to church. The picker-uppers went to the Letts' home church, Moore Union Congregational Christian Church, located in Buckhorn community about four miles from the country store.

Grandpa was a God-fearing man who took his religion seriously — and he had great expectations for the Sunday-go-to-meeting folks and especially the preacher. Not that Grandpa's nose was always clean, mind you, but that's another story for another day.

Rumor has it that one time a new preacher was voted on by the congregation and hired by the board of deacons. If I recollect correctly, it had something to do with needing someone fast and making do with a young fellow fresh out of college who would accept the low pay offered by a small country church.



Back then it was customary for the preacher to ask someone else to do the closing prayer and then he'd go to the vestibule. This was the time when church members could shake the preacher's hand, brag about the sermon, or say something personal to the pastor at the door as they were leaving.

On the first Sunday after hearing a lengthy sermon, my Grandpa looked the new minister straight in the eye and said, "You're something else."

The still-wet-behind-the-ears pastor was surprised about this comment and was even more curious the next Sunday when Grandpa shook his hand and said even more dramatically, "You're something else."

Now the minister got to thinking the next week that Grandpa must be bragging about him and that "something else" must mean that he was something special and doing a good job.

So the next Sunday when Grandpa repeated the ritual by saying "You're something else," the pastor responded. "Mr. Puzie, what do you mean by that?"

Grandpa shot back, "Well, you must be something else 'cause you sure ain't no preacher."

Needless to say that pastor didn't last long at Moore Union Congregational Christian Church, because if Grandpa didn't like him and told everybody who "set a spell" at his country store, the preacher was doomed. Besides, half the congregation was related to Grandpa and the graveyard full of Lett tombstones. Between the live yakkers and the prevailing ghosts a lot of taunting and haunting took place.

Back then preachers were called to preach, or they weren't really preachers but disciples of the Devil, according to Grandpa. And when Grandpa believed in something, he hammered it into your head until you finally said you agreed with him just to get him to quit badgering you.

I can remember hearing Grandpa preach many a sermon about just that … how the downfall of the old-time religion was coming about because the people in the pulpit weren't preachers at all but college-educated idiots. He said these new so-called ministers used "purty" words to describe God and fancy phrases about religion and could quote from the Good Book, but something was missing. Like the cook who left the yeast out of the bread, these highly schooled pastors lacked the main ingredient for making people's religious life rise to ecstasy.

What was missing? Fire in the soul, according to Grandpa, and if they didn't have that they were doomed to hellfire and brimstone. The gift of gab wasn't enough — the voice of God raging through was the real power, not silvery tongues. Rantings and ravings about sin were natural for the true preachers who were expected to save souls and bring sinners to their knees. According to Grandpa, preachers who couldn't preach were rotten to the core. Every Sunday was a revival or it "weren't" no Sabbath at all!

Even on his death-bed Grandpa was still preaching the same old sermon, "Give me that old-time religion." I came from the Midwest to visit and sat by his bed as he told me over and over again about the decay of religion. I longed to hear it from the vibrant Captain Puzie who dramatically expressed his views with such self-appointed authority and self-righteousness.

On our final encounter I wished I had captured this colorful character on a home movie long ago while he was standing in his own pulpit at the country store speaking fervently about the old-time religion. It was even too late to use my tape recorder because sentences were left hanging in mid-air as his voice trailed off to other subjects. By now I could fill in the gaps in his one-sided conversation.

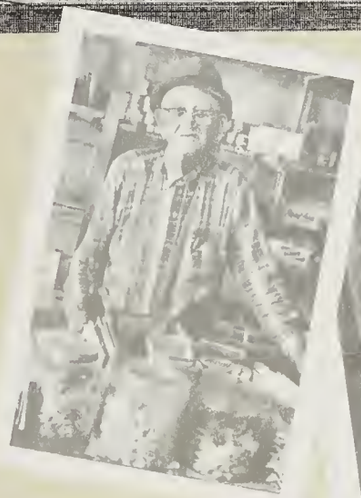
I had long tired of this sermon, could quote it word for word, but I will never tire of hearing Grandpa tell his same old stories again and again.

But, Grandpa, if you were here today I would have just one thing to say, **"You must be something else 'cause you sure ain't no preacher."**

grandpa's SERMON:

"GIVE ME THAT OLD-TIME RELIGION"

By AlexSandra "Sandy Lynn" Lett



▲ *Grandpa Puzie Lett, fondly called, "Captain Puzie."*
"Sandy Lynn" hanging out with Grandpa in 1970. ▶

"A TIMELESS PLACE"

"Grandpa's Sermon" is excerpted from the new book, "A Timeless Place: Lett's Set a Spell at the Country Store," by AlexSandra "Sandy Lynn" Lett. The book derives from her weekly newspaper column, which appears in "The Sanford Herald."

The book is a glimpse back at the Buckhorn community in Lee County. Sandy Lynn says she grew up "on a huge farm in the middle of Nowhere – 12 long miles from a Somewhere called Sanford and four miles from a no-stoplight town known as Broadway." Her Grandpa's country store was Buckhorn's social center. Her grandfather is the late Puzie Lett, who built Lett's Grocery and Filling Station in 1946.

Sandy Lynn's book is 222 pages in hardcover with 30 pictures.

Sandy Lynn Lett also presents "heart and soul" programs featuring a colorful Southern character.

Autographed copies of "A Timeless Place" can be ordered for $19.95 plus $4.55 postage and handling. North Carolina residents add $1.20 sales tax. Send checks or money orders to AlexSandra Lett, 1996 Buckhorn Road, Sanford, NC 27330. Phone: (919) 777-9362.

My Peanut Brittle

By Betty Page, Roanoke Rapids

In the 1950s I tasted my first peanut brittle made by a lady in our church. I tried to make it myself and failed. Finally one night, I called her and said the candy I made was so hard I couldn't get the spoon out of the pot. She laughed and told me to come over to her house and she'd show me. I went, I learned, and I've been making it ever since. At first, it was sort of hit or miss, but I finally measured and timed everything, and have had very few failures.

I find it most helpful to have everything ready before I turn on the burner. Use a heavy saucepan — mine is a 4-quart pressure cooker — one with a handle I can hold in my left hand and scrape out with my right when the moment comes. I butter a large cookie sheet and place it on the unlit back burners. A tablespoonful of baking soda is near — all lumps pressed out. Also nearby are 2 or 2 ½ cups of new peanuts; at least a dozen need to have the skin off so you can determine the degree of doneness. I usually keep some blanched nuts on hand. Frozen nuts skin easily.

Put one cup of white syrup (store brands work as well as Karo) in the pot on medium high heat. Add 1 cup of granulated sugar, ¼ teaspoon of salt and 1 teaspoon of vanilla — I like coconut flavoring, too, but some people don't — mix well. Add the peanuts and when the mixture begins to bubble, set a timer for 14 minutes.

Then I stand there and stir, using a straight-edge wooden spatula. I don't stir constantly, but often. Watch the color of the white peanuts as the timer nears 14 minutes. The nuts may pop a little as when baking.

When the peanuts are light tan, quickly sprinkle the soda over the surface of the candy, stir like crazy, and make sure all soda is mixed in. It will foam about halfway up the pot. Then pour quickly onto the cookie sheet, starting in the middle of the pan and going to one end and coming back to the other end. Use the spatula to spread — it will bubble back up. Scrape out the pot, fill it with hot water, and it will clean itself.

Atmosphere affects the final candy. Dryness is needed. If the candy feels a bit sticky, heat your oven to 350 degrees and place the cookie sheet in for about 2 seconds.

Betty Page's Peanut Brittle

1 cup white syrup
1 cup white granulated sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla
¼ teaspoon salt
2 cups raw peanuts (more or less as desired)
1 tablespoon baking soda

Combine syrup and sugar, salt and vanilla in heavy saucepan (at least 4-quart size). Place on medium high heat. Stir with wooden spatula until dissolved. Add peanuts. When mixture begins to boil, set timer at 14 minutes. Stir and mix until white peanuts are light tan (may occur before 14 minutes are up). Sprinkle soda over mixture, stir briskly. Pour on buttered cookie sheet. Cool. Break in pieces.

Editor's Note:

Betty Page has sent this peanut brittle to us at Carolina Country during the holiday season, and we can say it's the best we've ever had. We keep it to ourselves and don't offer it to other people in the building.

The Carolina Country Collection:

A Seasonal Gift Guide

Assembled on behalf of North Carolina's electric cooperatives by *Carolina Country*. See The Carolina Country Collection on our Web site at www.carolinacountry.com. For more information about advertising products and services on these pages, contact *Carolina Country* at (800) 662-8835, ext. 3077.

THE BOB TIMBERLAKE 2002 CALENDAR

The Bob Timberlake Gallery is pleased to present the new Bob Timberlake 2002 Calendar. Each month is highlighted by a large, seasonal painting by Bob Timberlake, beautifully reproduced in full color. Bob also shares some of his favorite quotations.

Don't miss this opportunity to share the seasons with Bob and this unique Bob Timberlake collectible. $15.00 plus $5.00 postage and handling. (NC residents add 6% sales tax of 90 cents).

The Bob Timberlake Gallery
1714 E. Center St. Ext., Lexington, NC 27292
(800) 244-0095 www.bobtimberlake.com

AUNT RUBY'S PEANUTS

The pride of Enfield, Aunt Ruby's Peanuts make a perfect gift. Protein, vitamin B, high food energy. Great for a snack, gift or fund-raising item. Call for a catalog, or see Aunt Ruby's products on the Web at *www.auntrubyspeanuts.com.*

A&B Milling Co., Enfield, (800) 843-0105
www.auntrubyspeanuts.com

CHRISTMAS TREES FOR SALE

"Growers of quality Fraser firs since 1959." Choose and cut, refreshments, tours by appointment, mail order. Wreaths, garland, boughs. Open daily 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Santa will be visiting. Call for dates.

Cartner Christmas Tree Farm
Mountain Glen Golf Course
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Newland, NC 28657

Phone: (828) 733-2391
Fax: (828) 733-3799
E-mail:
mcartner@skybest.com
www.carolinafraserfir.com

MAYBERRY COLLECTABLES

Mayberry coffee, mugs, T-shirts, free map of sights to see (including Andy's boyhood home, now a bed & breakfast), gift packages and more.

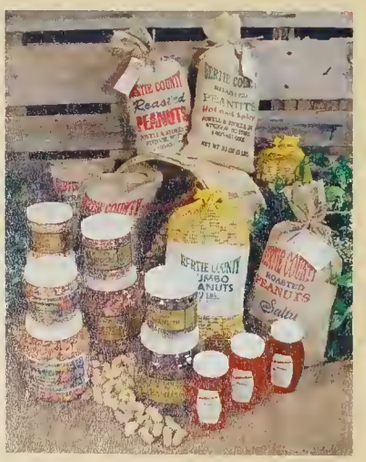
Mount Airy "Mayberry" Coffee Company
319 Mount View Drive
Mount Airy, NC 27030
(336) 789-4186 Bus./Fax Mobile: (336) 710-0148
E-mail: mamcc@surry.net
www.MayberryCoffee.com

BERTIE COUNTY PEANUTS

The soil of Bertie County makes it the best place in the world to grow peanuts. Poppa Jack started with "blister fried" peanuts with that crunchy, fresh flavor. They were a big hit with real "connoisseurs" (the farmers at the warehouse).

New this year: Boiled Peanuts, Bertie's Best Basket, and the Bubba Bucket

The traditional: farmer-style fried peanuts, plus roasted or raw in the bag, chocolate jumbos, peanut brittle southern style, and gift packs. Free brochure.



Bertie County Peanuts
217 US 13 North
Windsor, NC 27983
(800) 457-0005
E:mail: peanuts@eastcarolina.com
www.pnuts.net

SOUTHERN SUPREME NUTTY FRUITCAKE

Southern Supreme Old Fashioned Nutty Fruitcake captures all the delicious flavors of homemade goodness from the past. Each cake is created with the finest quality of nuts and fruit. Our cake is so unique from the rest because they are handmade and hand decorated. We use more English walnuts and pecans to make it a moist and chewy cake that is truly supreme. Visit our showroom or call us for a brochure.

Southern Supreme Fruitcake
1699 Hoyt Scott Rd
Bear Creek, NC 27207
(336) 581-3141
www.sosupreme.com

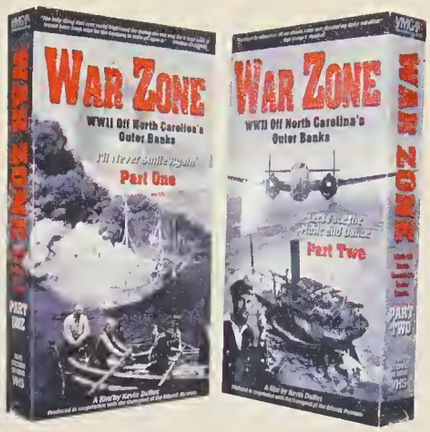
FRESH ROASTED SPECIALTY COFFEES

Coffee beans from plantations in exotic corners of the world, brought to Greensboro and then expertly roasted for brewing the perfect cup. We combine our coffees with Carolina gourmet goodies to create memorable gifts. We'll help you choose from over 60 Carolina Coffee varieties and blends; select the treats; and handwrite your greetings. Whether it's coffee samplers or extravagant gifts in style, we'll make your gift giving simple. Just give us a call.

Carolina Coffee Roasting Company
400 State Street
Greensboro, NC 27405
(800) 457-2556
www.carolinacoffee.com

"WAR ZONE"

A new film by Kevin Duffus about World War II off North Carolina's Outer Banks. Two 90-minute videos. archival footage and contemporary interviews.North Carolina's Gregg Gelb Swing Band's soundtrack (available as a CD for $14.95). Fifteen percent of the proceeds benefits the Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum. "War Zone" is available for $29.95 per tape, plus tax and shipping



Video Marketing Group
Raleigh, NC
(800) 647-3536

THE ART OF DAVID E. DOSS

2002 Calendar featuring 12 North Carolina images. makes a great gift for family, friends and business associates $10.99 each plus $5.00 postage & handling (NC residents add 6% sales tax).

The Art of David E. Doss/Southern Home Gallery
2715 Reynolda Road
Winston-Salem, NC 27106
(888)-761-8822
www.davidedoss.com

"OCRACOKE SPEAKS"

The Ocracoke "brogue" is on videotape and CD, recorded by the N.C. Language and Life Program. Visit www.ncsu.edu/chass/english/linguistics/ocracoke.htm. The CD is $15, the tape is $10.

Ocracoke Preservation Society
PO Box 491
Ocracoke, NC 27690-0491
(252) 928-7375
E-mail: ops@ocracoke-museum.org

STEGALL SMOKED TURKEYS AND HAMS

Nothing tops an all-natural wood-smoked turkey or ham from the Stegall family.

Choose from the following:

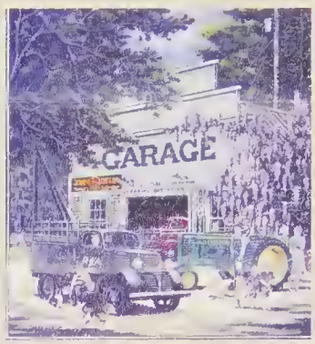
Turkey Breast	5-6 lbs.	$35.50
Boneless Breast	5-6 lbs.	$41.50
Whole Turkey	9-10 lbs.	$38.95
or	10-11 lbs.	$41.45
Honey Glazed Ham	6-7 lbs.	$40.95
Country Ham	12-13 lbs.	$37.50

N.C. residents add 6 percent sales tax. For items shipped west of the Mississippi, add $9.95 per turkey breast or ham, and $14.50 per whole turkey.

Stegall Smoked Turkey, Inc.
6608 E. Marshville Blvd.
Marshville, NC 28103
Order: (1-800-851-6034)
Phone: (704) 624-6628
Fax: (704) 624-2510

"A BETTER DAY WITH REA"

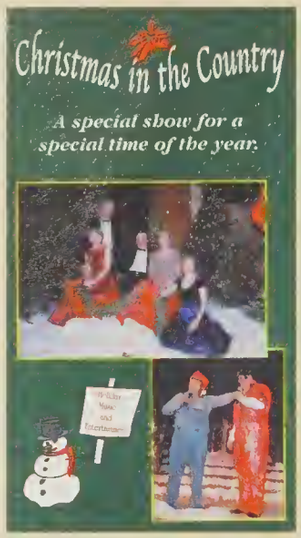
The Renfroe Collection of Fine Art oil painting by Pamela C. Renfroe entitled, "A Better Day With REA." The work, licensed by John Deere Company, depicts "a rural garage where people are eagerly awaiting electricity for the first time." The limited edition print retails for $50 plus $12 shipping and handling.



Renfroe Collection of Fine Art
Hartwell, Ga.
(706) 376-5707
E-mail renfroeart@hartcom.net

DOWN HOME COUNTRY CHRISTMAS

A special holiday show produced by Duplin Outdoor Drama. Holiday music, family entertainment and the talented Down Home Country performers at Kenan Memorial Auditorium. Groups welcome.



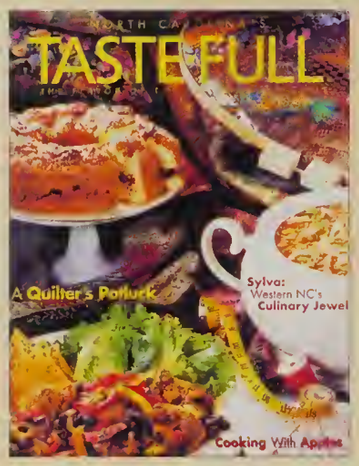
Fridays and Saturdays, at 8 p.m. from November 23 through December 15.

Adults $12, and $10 for seniors and groups of 15+ Children under 12, $5. Children under 6, free.

Kenan Memorial Auditorium
NC Hwy. 11/903 North
Kenansville, NC 28349
(800) 793-3726
(910) 296-2345

A NORTH CAROLINA RECIPE MAGAZINE

In many ways, North Carolina is known for its unique fare. From the seafood to down-home southern cooking, the possibilities are endless. The magazine North Carolina's Taste•Full: The Flavor of the Carolina Lifestyle gives you access to that famous Carolina cuisine. A recent issue featured New Bern's Maola Ice Cream, a North Carolina apple orchard near Pilot Mountain, the restaurants of Sylva, and many recipes. A year's subscription (6 issues) is $19.95.



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November

MOUNTAINS
(west of I-77)

Ashe County Arts Council
Ongoing events, Jefferson
Through Nov. 14, painting exhibit by Richard Tumbleston,
Nov. 3, Talent night
Nov. 19-Dec. 31, Trees and Wreaths, Ashe Arts Center, (336) 246-ARTS

Ashe Civic Center
Ongoing events, West Jefferson
Nov. 3, Big Country Bluegrass w/Carolina Mist, $10, bluegrass;
Nov. 4, Day One-Gospel Show, $10, 2 p.m.
Nov. 17, "Hansel and Gretel," $6/$3, 3 p.m./7:30 p.m.;
Nov. 18, U.S. Air Force Band, 2 p.m., free; Nov. 27, "The Littlest Angel," Tarradiddle Players, $6/$3, (336) 246-4483

Asheville Art Museum
Ongoing events, Asheville
Through Dec. 9, "Pop Art! Selections from Weatherspoon Art Gallery," (828) 253-3227

Folk Art Center
Ongoing events, Asheville
Nov. 25, "Tellabration" story-telling event,
Through Jan. 31, "Chair Show 4," (828) 298-7928

Hog Happenin'
Nov. 3, Shelby
Tar Heel State BBQ Championship, car show, music, crafts, (704) 482-4202

Carolina Pottery Festival
Nov. 10, Shelby
Cleveland County Fairgrounds, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., 50 potters
(704) 542-8869

Miniature Horse Race
Nov. 10, Taylorsville
1 p.m., free, (828) 632-3043

Cherokee Seven Clans Art Guild Thanksgiving
Nov. 16-17, Cherokee
Ceremonial Grounds, (800) 438-1601

Christmas in the Park
Nov. 23, Blowing Rock
2 p.m., Main Street parade,
5 p.m., Memorial Park, bonfire, Santa, hot chocolate, free
(828) 295-5222

Wood Kiln Opening
Nov. 24, Blowing Rock
Hwy. 321, choose-and-cut Christmas trees, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m., (828) 295-3862

Waynesville Christmas Parade
Nov. 26, Waynesville, 4 p.m.
(828) 456-3517

NC Symphony Holiday Concert
Nov. 27, Lincolnton
Lincolnton County Citizens Center, 8 p.m., (704) 735-7418

Sylva Christmas Parade
Nov. 27, Sylva
(828) 586-1577

Festival of Trees
Nov. 29-Dec. 2, Brevard
Silvermont Mansion, 40 trees, cafe, raffle, $3, (828) 877-5572

PIEDMONT
(between I-77 and I-95)

North Carolina Museum of Art
Ongoing exhibits, Raleigh
Through Jan. 6, "Indivisible: Stories of American Community," (919) 839-6262, www.ncartmuseum.org

Oakboro Regional Museum
Through Nov. 19, Oakboro
Works by local photographer Eddie Shimpock
(704) 485-3612

Mint Museum of Art
Ongoing Exhibits, Charlotte
Through Nov. 18, "Saltglaze from the Rhineland to Randolph County;" Through April 28, 2002, "Ansel Adams: The Man Who Captured the Earth's Beauty Part II;" Nov. 10-March 31, "William Morris: Myth, Object and the Animal," (704) 337-2000, www.mintmuseum.org

Also Nov. 16, Dr. Samuel Grober, "Of Meiss-en Men: The Pangs and Passions of Collecting European Porcelain," (704) 366-2504.

Brock Performing Arts Center
Ongoing events, Mocksville
Nov. 20, Ballet Magnificat, $15/$12, 7:30 p.m.
Nov. 29, African American Dance Ensemble, $8/$6, 7:30 p.m., (336) 751-3000

Ackland Art Museum
Ongoing events, Chapel Hill
Through Nov. 11, "Space, Abstraction and Freedom: 20th-Century Art from the Collection of Mary and Jim Patton"
Through Dec. 30, "Masters of the Medium: European Drawings from the Collection of the Ackland Art Museum,"
(919) 966-5736
www.ackland.org

Museum of Life and Science
Ongoing events, Durham
Through March 2002, mongoose lemurs exhibit
Through Jan., "Biodiversity 101: Saving Life on Earth,"
Nov. 3, "Rocket Propulsion & Space Craft Design,"
(919) 220-5429,
www.ncmls.org

ThunderFest 2001
Nov. 1, Rockingham
Downtown, 11 a.m. - 9 p.m.
Fun for the entire family: interactive games, food & more,
(910) 582-2861

History Lecture
Nov. 1, Davidson
Davidson College, historian David Lewis, 7:30 p.m., free
(704) 894-2288

Rural Hill Sheepdog Trials
Nov. 2-4, Huntersville
hayride, dog training tips, music, antique tractors, food
(704) 875-3113,
www.lochnorman.org

Craft & Antique Show
Nov. 2-3, Concord
3258 Cold Springs Rd., 10 a.m. - 6 p.m., (704) 795-9068

Cozy Cottage Craft Sale
Nov. 2-3, Kernersville
Kernersville Community House
(336) 993-2260

Cotton Festival
Nov. 3, Dunn, (910) 892-3282

Antique Truck Show
Nov. 3, Greensboro
NAPA Warehouse, (336) 657-8083

Bottle Festival
Nov. 3, Raleigh
State Fairgrounds, 7 a.m.-3 p.m., free, (919) 789-4545,
www.antiquebottles.com/raleigh

Storytelling Festival
Nov. 9-10, Kernersville
Historic Korner's Folly, $5 person/$10 family or free w/donation of new children's book, (336) 877-4110, www.ncstoryguild.org

Randolph Quilt Show
Nov. 9-11, Asheboro
Moring Arts Center, (336) 629-6211

Antiques Show
Nov. 9-11, Southern Pines
(910) 692-2051

"Footloose" Theatrical Event
Nov. 13, Winston-Salem
Stephens Center, NC School of Arts, $34/$32, 8 p.m., (336) 721-1945, www.ncarts.edu/Stevens_Center

Piedmont Crafts Fair
Nov. 16-18, Winston-Salem
M.C. Benton Convention Center, 100 artisans, $6/$5 (336) 725-1516

Festival of Trees
Nov. 16-18, Southern Pines
Pine Needles Lodge & Golf Club, (910) 692-3323

Old Time Square Dance
Nov. 17, Denton
Featuring Oak Tree Boys and New Pilot Mountaineers, 7 - 10:30 p.m., (336) 475-9397

Gunsmith Exhibit
Nov. 17-Sept. 22, Winton-Salem, The Gallery at Old Salem, "Gunsmiths of Salem and the Vogler Family of Artisans," (888) OLD-SALEM, www.oldsalem.org

Plow Day
Nov. 17, Pinnacle
Horne Creek Living Historical Farm, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., farming the old-fashioned way, free, (336) 325-2298

Blue Ridge Jamboree
Nov. 17, Mount Airy
Andy Griffith Playhouse, 7:30 p.m., $7, bluegrass/string music, (800) 286-6193

Farm City Week
Nov. 17, 19-21, Ellerbe
Nov. 17, Farmers parade
Nov. 19, Farmers luncheon
Nov. 20, Farmers banquet
Nov. 21, Youth Cotton Picking Contest, (910) 997-8255

Old Salem Christmas
Nov. 17- Dec. 31, Winston-Salem, $15/$8, view and participate in Moravian holiday customs, (888) 653-7253, www.oldsalem.org

Seagrove Pottery Festival
Nov. 18, Seagrove
Seagrove school gym, 10 a.m.-7 p.m., (910) 873-7887

Christmas Open House
Nov. 18, Lexington
Buggy rides, entertainment, (336) 236-4218

A Lillington Christmas
Nov. 23, Lillington
Luminaries, carolers, live Nativity Scene, horse-drawn sleigh rides, (910) 893-3751

Christmas Parade & Festivities
Nov. 29, Oakboro
N. Main St., food, hayrides, tree lighting, (704) 485-3612

Christmas at Knox Inn
Nov. 30-Dec. 1, Wadesboro
First United Methodist Church, dinner theater, 6 p.m., $15, (704) 694-4181

COAST
(East of I-95)

"Documentary Photographs of Ocracoke Island"
Through Nov. 24, Ocracoke, Ocracoke Preservation Society Museum, (252) 928-7375

"Horses of Shackleford"
Through Nov. 4, Beaufort
acrylic paintings by Alexander Kaszas, North Carolina Maritime Museum, (252) 728-7317,

Mount Olive College
Ongoing events, Mount Olive, Nov. 17, 50th Anniversary Celebration, food, speakers, entertainment, Nov. 30, College Concert Choir, Rodgers Chapel, free, 8 p.m., (919) 658-2503

Coastal Carolina Fair & Expo
Nov. 1-10, New Bern
Craven County Jaycees Fairgrounds, demolitian derby, petting zoo, live shows, rides, (252) 636-0303

Festival Latino
Nov. 3, Wilmington
Hugh MacRae Park, 11 a.m., music, food, dance, crafts, (910) 799-2900

Harvest Days Festival
Nov. 3, Whiteville
(910) 642-9212

Mattamuskeet Fun Ride
Nov. 3, Swan Quarter
Bike around & across Lake Mattamuskeet, (888) 493-3826

Classic Car Show
Nov. 3, Wilmington
Battleship North Carolina's Riverside Park, 10 a.m.- 3 p.m.,free, (910) 791-9981

African-American Festival
Nov. 3, Murfreesboro
Hertford County Middle School, 10 a.m.- 6 p.m., exhibits, entertainment, soul food, (252) 398-8192

Brighter Living Expo
Nov. 9, Morehead City
Crystal Coast Civic Center, health screenings, workshops, (252) 726-4727

Veteran's Day Celebration
Nov. 9, Greenville
Pitt Community College, front lawn flag pole, 9 a.m., (252) 321-4287

Veteran's Day Service & Blood Drive
Nov. 10, Wilmington
Battleship North Carolina, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m., (910) 251-5797,

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Core Sound WATERFOWL WEEKEND

continued on next page

Lite & Lean Pork Chops

(143 calories 5 grams fat 2 grams carbohydrates)

4 boneless pork loin chops, cut 1-inch thick

Olive oil spray or other vegetable spray

2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce

1 tablespoon Cavender's Greek seasoning

Place chops in a baking dish and spray lightly with vegetable or olive oil spray on both sides. Brush each chop (on both sides) with Worcestershire sauce & sprinkle with Cavender's seasoning. Bake, uncovered, at 350 degrees, for approximately 20-25 minutes, (or until meat thermometer registers 160 degrees), turning once.

****

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Total. Average number of copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 465,871 (September 484,400).

Small Potatoes
Nov. 10, Beaufort
Clawson's Restaurant
Musical duo, jazz, gospel, swing, 8 p.m., (252) 728-5991, www.downeastfolkarts.org

Wesley Pines Annual Bazaar
Nov. 10, Lumberton
10 a.m.- 3 p.m., free, (910) 738-9691

Open Individual Fishing Tournament
Nov. 10, Buxton
$3, register before 9 a.m., fish from 8 a.m. - 12 p.m.
(252) 995-4253

Fish Baron's Ball/Auction
Nov. 10, New Bern
Riverfront Convention Center, 6 p.m. - 1 a.m., dinner, dancing
(252) 633-2288

Second Sunday Authors Series
Nov. 11, Wilson
Graham novelist Pamela Duncan and poet Joseph Bathanti of Statesville, (919) 962-3461

U.S. Air Force Heritage Brass Quintet
Nov. 13, Bayboro
Pamlico County High School Auditorium, 7:30 p.m., free
(252) 249-3079, www.pamlicomusic.org

"Inherit the Wind"
Nov. 15-20, Greenville
East Carolina Playhouse
$25-$45, (252) 328-6829

Veteran's Day Concert
Nov. 15, Wilmington
Thalian Hall, Irish tenor John McDermott, 8 p.m., (800) 523-2820, www.thalianhall.com

Fall Holiday Art Tour
Nov. 16-25, Morehead City,
Collections from 15 area art galleries, (252) 726-9156

Annual Church Bazaar
Nov. 17, Hatteras
Hatteras United Methodist Church in Hatteras Village, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m., crafts, food, (252) 986-2149

Tree Lighting Ceremony
Nov. 19, Greenville
Pitt Community College, front lawn, scholarship fundraiser, 6 p.m., $5/light, (252) 321-4287

Festival of Thanksgiving
Nov. 19-25, Nags Head
5-K run, Jr. fishing tournament, Bill Deal and the Rhondels on Sat., (252) 441-5508

Taste of Thanksgiving
Nov. 20-21, Elizabeth City
Farmer's market featuring seasonal, homegrown products, (252) 338-3954

Holiday Celebration
Nov. 23, Elizabeth City
Waterfront Park, illumination and lighted boat parade, 6 p.m., free, (252) 338-4104

Island of Lights Festival
Nov. 23, Carolina Beach
Light-Up at the Lake, 7 p.m., Nov. 30, parade, Carolina/Kure Beaches, (910) 458-7116

Ocean Isle Christmas Parade
Nov. 24, Ocean Isle Beach
(910) 579-2166

Christmas Flotilla
Nov. 24, Swansboro
Food, live entertainment, 6 p.m., (252) 353-0241

Kites with Lites
Nov. 24, Kitty Hawk
Jockey's Ridge State Park, lit stunt kites, Christmas carols, hot apple cider & cookies, (877) 441-4124,

Holiday Flotilla & Festival
Nov. 24, Wrightsville Beach
Fireworks, lighted boat parade along Banks Channel, 10 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., (910) 791-4122

Swan Days
Dec. 1-2, Swan Quarter
Mattamuskeet Lodge
Nature event with crafts, 10k walk, workshops, food, tours of wildlife refuge, (888) 493-3826,

Listing Information

Deadline for Jan: Nov. 22
Deadline for Feb: Dec. 22

A phone number must be included with event listings in order to be published. Photos are welcome.

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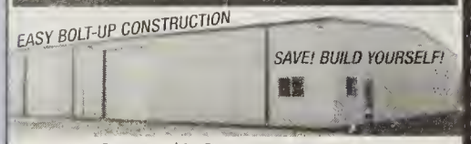

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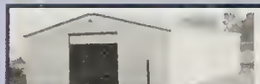

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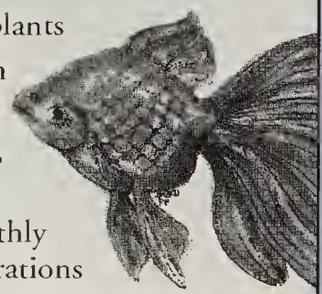

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AND I QUOTE

ANSWERS ARE ON PAGE 40.

Ron Hachet of Hendersonville sent us this clipping from the Durham Herald-Sun:

But let's look at the house again from the front, where the entrance foyer is flanked by a formal living room and dining room. Double closets in the foyer provide plenty of space to hang your coats and guests.

Percy P. Cassidy

The first sign of a bad memory is

__ __ __ __ __ __
s a m c s e

__ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ .
a l b d a r c b a c

Use the capital letters below to fill in the blanks above.

A E I C L N O R S means
s c r a m b l e d

Phonetics

Cy Nical Says:

November is the month when we Americans close our eyes, bow our heads, and give thanks for the turkeys we are about to receive.

__ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ !
8 4 3 6 9 3 8 6 8 3

If you were to punch in the numbers above on your telephone pad you would spell out the three missing words. Go figure!

Word play

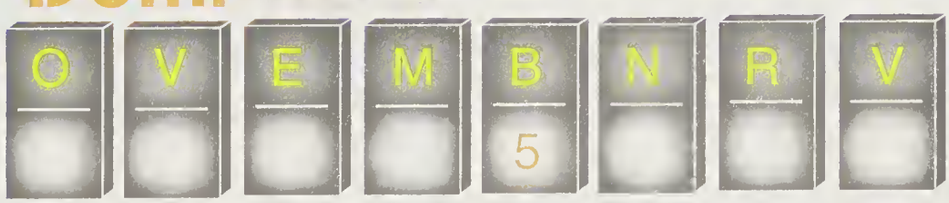
ward-wary-pray

Where there's SMOKE...

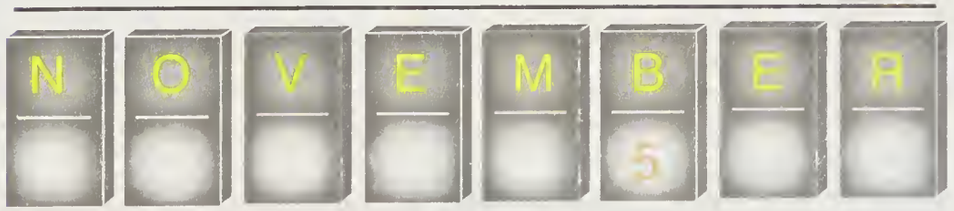
To go from SMOKE to FIRE you must drop a letter or change a letter in each step to spell a different word. Letters can be re-arranged in any step. Your answer may be different from ours.

1. S M O K E
2. __ __ __ __
3. __ __ __ __
4. __ __ __ __
5. F I R E

Domi-Nos



Letters have been substituted for digits in this multiplication puzzle. Can you replace the digits that unscramble NOVEMBER? Repeated letters stand for repeated digits.



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Joyner's Answers

Domi-No.s:
OVEMBRV x B = NOVEMBER
1428570+ x 5 = 7142852O

Percy P Cassidy: A Clear Conscience

Phone-etics: Then we vote!

Word Play:
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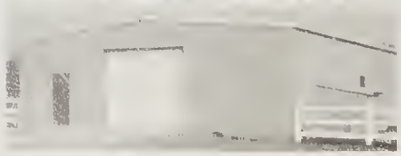

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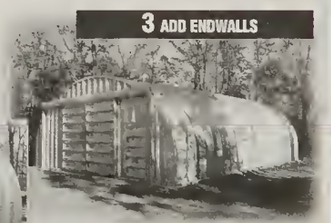

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Can you *trust* what you *see* on the Internet?

Did you know that under Bill 602P, the federal government will levy an "alternative postage fee" of five cents for every e-mail message you send?

The legislation, currently pending, would compensate the U.S. Postal Service for lost business from the growing popularity of e-mail. The government would bill your Internet Service provider, which would in turn bill you.

This was the essence of an e-mail alert I recently received, with the sender urging me to write my congressman in protest and to forward the alert to everyone in my e-mail address book.

Sure, it's all bogus, an Internet hoax and urban legend that's been circulating for years. But these kinds of info scams do snag their victims, wasting time and draining productivity.

This is just one way that the Internet is abused as an information medium. The e-mail with the "inside" information about a stock, the Web site with "unbiased" medical advice that's silently sponsored by a pharmaceutical or herbal company, the Internet discussion group "troll" who deliberately posts inflammatory opinions to start arguments — all are examples of information abuse.

The Internet is not unique here. People, businesses, and governments have been abusing information delivery channels from time immemorial. Microsoft Corp., combining elements of both old and new, embarrassed itself when it was revealed last month that a group it funded had orchestrated a nationwide campaign of "citizen" letters to government officials urging them to end their antitrust actions against the company.

Some of the letters, purportedly, were written by dead people, according to the Los Angeles Times. All of the letters were made to appear to be spontaneous expressions of ordinary people.

Though the Internet is not unique, it is special. As the greatest boon to information dissemination since the invention of the printing press, it's also the greatest boon to info scams. Because it's so easy to put information on the Net, it's so easy to find false information as well.

How can you protect yourself? How should you ferret out good information on the Net from bad? How do you find truth?

First, don't overreact. There is much information of value to be found everywhere on the Net. You just need to think critically about what you come across.

- Think about who's behind the information. Is it a news organization, professional or trade group, government agency, nonprofit organization, company, educational institution, advocacy group, student or hobbyist? Different sources employ different levels of thoroughness in research and fact-checking and different levels of objectivity.
- Think about why the person or organization is presenting the information. Individuals and organizations often have agendas, sometimes explicit, sometimes hidden. If you uncover the agenda and keep it in mind when evaluating the information, you'll be better able to filter out any bias.
- Think about whether or not the information is paid for. Some Internet search engines place sites at the top of their listings not because of their usefulness or popularity but because these sites have paid for top billing. Some book review sites accept payments from publishers for endorsing books without notifying readers. When in doubt, send the site an e-mail message asking about its policies.
- Think about if, or how widely, the information diverges from your current understanding. If it diverges widely and may affect an important business, health or family decision, try to verify the same information with at least two other sources. Information scientists call this the "principle of triangulation of data."
- Think about whether the information is new or old. A lot of deadwood data is floating around in cyberspace at Web sites that haven't been updated in several years. If the site doesn't include a "last updated" line or otherwise date its content, check out some of its links. If more than a couple are no longer working, the information at the site may no longer be up to date either.
- Think about substance. Don't judge a Web site by its appearance alone. Looks can and do deceive. But appearance does count. A site that looks slopped together may include information that's been sloppily researched and presented.

In short, be skeptical, not cynical, about the Internet as an informational resource. The watchword is "Caveat lector" — Let the reader beware.

Reid Goldsborough is a syndicated columnist and author of the book "Straight Talk About the Information Superhighway." He can be reached at reidgold@netaxs.com or http://members.home.net/reidgold.

Here are some Web sites that can help:

About.com's Urban Legends: http://urbanlegends.tqn.com

Vmyths.com: www.vmyths.com

How to Critically Analyze Information Sources: www.library.cornell.edu/okuref/research/skill26.htm

Evaluating Web Resources: www2.widener.edu/Wolfgram-Memorial-Library/webevaluation/webeval.htm

Thinking Critically about World Wide Web Resources: www.library.ucla.edu/libraries/college/help/critical/index.htm

New electric and gelled-fuel fireplace kits offer efficiency

By James Dulley

Two types of fireplace kits are the best options for homeowners who don't want the hassle involved with wood-burning fireplaces. You can be sitting in front of a fire, with either an electric or a gelled-fuel fireplace, 15 minutes after taking it out of the box and plugging it in. Installing a wood-burning fireplace takes days or weeks because you need to add a chimney or flue and it's expensive.

The real flames from a gelled-fuel (renewable natural grape-alcohol base) model or the simulated flames from the new electric fireplaces are difficult to distinguish from a real wood fire. The mechanism in some of the electric fireplaces also creates a realistic log crackling sound. For people who already have an existing fireplace, an electric log kit can be purchased separately and installed in it.

Three versions of electric fireplaces (top to bottom): Symphony Corner Unit by Dimplex, www.dimplex.com, (800) 824-5090; Bartlett Wood Mantel Fireplace by Rustic Crafts, www.rustic crafts.com, (877) 467-8784; "912-1" by ReadyBuilt, www.readybuilt.com, (410) 233-5833.

Since electric fireplaces plug into a standard wall outlet, they are limited to 1,500 watts of heat as are most electric heaters. No heated air is drawn out of your house as with a standard fireplace, so they do not waste heat. The gelled-fuel fireplaces produce about 2,500 Btu of heat per hour and burn about four hours with a single 16-ounce can. A log set can burn just one or several cans simultaneously to vary the heat output and the appearance of the flames. If you choose to buy an entire fireplace kit, you will find that the hand-finished real wood, marble, stone, etc., fireplace surrounds and mantels rival the best gas log fireplaces. Since high heat is not a factor, attractive bookcases and shelves can be built close to the opening.

A corner-style design is ideal for rooms with limited space and to project the heat throughout the room. Some of the electric logs themselves are real wood, not fake ceramic. Freestanding models, with a decorative, simulated cast iron appearance, can be located away from the wall. They even have optional vertical stovepipes for realism.

What makes the electric fireplaces ideal is that you can use them year-round for the ambiance of a fire. The electronic controls and tiny motors used to create the realistic flames and sounds consume less than 200 watts. Using your electric fireplace (heat turned off) will barely increase the cooling load on your central air-conditioner.

Gelled-fuel fireplaces should only be used during the winter because burning the fuel during the summer adds both heat and humidity to indoor air. Although fumes from burning grape-based gelled alcohol with ample combustion air are not harmful, they add greenhouse gases (carbon dioxide) to the environment.

Many models allow you to adjust the appearance from relaxing, lazy, flickering flames to a raging fire. The heat output, when switched on, can be controlled independently of the flames' appearance.

One of the neatest designs is the Visiflame electric log. This design uses a smoked acrylic plastic movie-type screen located in the back of the fireplace behind the logs. Red and gold lights inside the logs create the appearance of embers and also reflect off foil ribbons onto the smoked movie-type screen. An adjustable tiny blower makes the ribbons dance to control the intensity of the flames.

Other designs simulate flames by using a combination of colored lights and rotating translucent disks to create the flickering flame image. Special screening creates a natural smoky appearance behind and above the electric logs. To simulate the realistic crackling sound of burning logs, a spinning foil drum hits against a unique sounding board.

The logs used in a gelled-fuel fireplace also look realistic. There is a special grate and burning chamber that holds the cans of fuel. This fuel chamber has an adjustable grate to control the rate of burn, size of the flames and the heat output. The 24-inch-wide logs can hold up to six cans of gelled-fuel for a maximum of 15,000 Btu of heat per hour.

Unlike vent-free natural gas fireplaces, there are no local codes banning gelled-fuel fireplaces. Pop the top off of the cans and place them into the burning chamber in the logs. The fuel lights easily with a match. To put the fire out, a special hook is used to slide a cover over the cans to extinguish them.

Write for (instantly download - www.dulley.com) Utility Bills Update No. 680, a buyer's guide of 11 electric and gelled-fuel logs and fireplace kits, styles, heat outputs, flame types, features and prices. Please include $3 and a business-size SASE: James Dulley, Carolina Country, 6906 Royalgreen Dr., Cincinnati, OH 45244.

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Hank's gardening guide

by Hank Smith

Autumn is in the air. As temperatures drop, we almost forget the summer heat, and how much we appreciated a cool shady spot in the yard. Distinctive autumn color adds a bonus to the landscape with the yellow and orange foliage of sugar maples, the vivid dark purple of Japanese maples, the bright sunny yellow of gingko, the coppery reds of crape myrtles, and the brilliant show of native sourwoods. Amaryllis bulbs, planted in pots of rich soil, produce flamboyantly-hued blooms for Christmas cheer, which will continue to flower with ease for years to come. Poinsettias spell Christmas, yet they are much more demanding in culture than the amaryllis. As the rose garden retires with winter, think ahead to better control diseases during the growing season: black spot, powdery mildew, brown canker, anthracnose, root knot and crown gall.

Amaryllis bulbs produce flamboyant blooms.

Vegetable Garden

Sow seeds of fast-maturing vegetables now. These include turnips for greens, radishes and garden cress. Similar to persimmon fruit, the flavor of turnips, parsnips and kale improves if harvested after the first frost. Set out asparagus plants anytime until early spring. They should permanently occupy a spot in the garden. Prepare soil by tilling to a depth of at least 12 inches. Work in about one-third organic matter and two-thirds fertile garden soil. Plant crown about three inches deep and 18 inches apart in rows four feet apart. Cover with three inches of mulch. Asparagus can serve as an attractive background for annuals, perennials and bulbs. Its feathery foliage compliments low-growing flowers.

Aloe Vera

Used for centuries in various countries, the gel inside the leaf of Aloe Vera treats many ailments, including eczema, burns, sunburn and insect bites. Some of today's cosmetics contain the gel of this plant. Cleopatra is said to have used the gel for beautifying and preserving her skin. In Florida, where sunburns are common, many homes grow Aloe Vera in kitchen gardens. Some native Floridians call it, "Ungentine plant." Sometimes used for X-ray burns, Aloe Vera grows as a rosette of leaves supported by a short woody stem. Leaves are gray-green, spotted with white when young, and the spots usually disappear with age. A few rather blunt spines edge the leaves which are a thick fillet of gel covered with a smooth green skin. The gel or juice is squeezed from the leaves. Like most succulents, it prefers a gritty, dry, chalky, sandy soil and less gel is produced when it is planted in rich soil. This plant is a slow grower and resists responding to fertilizers. If fertilized, use a liquid version sparingly and infrequently. Water once a week.

The gel inside the leaf of Aloe Vera treats many ailments, including eczema, burns, sunburn and insect bites.

Holiday Cacti

Thanksgiving and Christmas cacti require cool temperatures and long nights. Warm night temperatures above 65 degrees can delay flowering unless nights are long. When night temperatures drop below 60 degrees F, flower buds develop, regardless of day length. Do not expose to light after sunset.

Rose Care

Winter winds can whip and tear at tall hybrid tea roses, often causing root damage. After plants become dormant — late this month or in December — cut back plants to about three feet from the base. If any shoots grow prematurely during warm spells of winter, it will not matter. Roses need a late-spring pruning anyway. Secure climbing roses to a trellis or arbor to prevent wind damage.

Winter Weed Control

Practically all lawns exhibit some type of winter weed problem. Broadleaf weeds (henbits, chickweed, clovers), wild onion and wild garlic are probably the worst offenders. Control most winter weeds by applying a weedicide. Contact your County Extension Office for a list of approved chemicals. Wild garlic is usually more common than wild onion and harder to control. It's nearly impossible to get rid of either of these with a single treatment. It usually takes two or three years to prevent formation of new bulbs or bulblets. Apply the weedicide this fall after plants come up and are growing. Apply once more in the spring to check those that continue to grow. Repeat treatments until onions or garlic are eradicated. For best results, add one teaspoon of household detergent to each gallon of spray; use only when plants are dry and there is little chance of rain for six to eight hours.

Winter Clean Up

Tidy outside areas by removing dead plants and pruning away broken or diseased limbs. If rainfall has been scarce and a heavy freeze is in the forecast, give plants a good soaking to avoid a lack of moisture that can cause drying of evergreen foliages and dropping of fruit and flowerbuds. Spring flowering bulbs not already in the ground should be planted within the next few weeks. These include tulips, hyacinths, daffodils and narcissus.

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TURKEY SESAME

This recipe by Victor Friedmann of Durham was the Grand Prize Winner ($1,000) in the 20th Annual North Carolina Turkey Cooking Contest, sponsored by the N.C. Turkey Federation.

- ½ turkey breast, boned and skinned (about 1½ pounds), sliced into 1-inch thick slices
- 2 teaspoons French or Italian herbs
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- ½ cup buttermilk
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- ½ cup plain bread crumbs
- ½ cup sesame seeds, toasted
- ¼ cup Parmesan cheese
- ¼ cup finely chopped parsley
- 4 tablespoons butter, melted

Sauce

- 1 cup white wine
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- ¼ cup whipping cream
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- ⅓ cup butter

For free copies of the six winning turkey recipes, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to:

Turkey Recipes
NC Poultry Federation
4020 Barrett Drive, Suite 102
Raleigh, NC 27609

Rub herbs, salt and pepper on turkey breast slices. Place turkey in a plastic, self-closing bag. Mix the buttermilk and mustard together thoroughly and pour over turkey. Close bag; refrigerate 2 to 3 hours or overnight.

In a shallow dish, mix together bread crumbs, sesame seeds, Parmesan cheese and parsley. Remove turkey slices from the marinade one at a time. Roll in bread crumb mixture, coating well. Place slices in a shallow, non-stick baking pan. Discard marinade. Drizzle slices with melted butter. Bake at 350 degrees until golden brown, 30-40 minutes.

In a saucepan, over medium-high heat, cook wine and lemon juice for 6-8 minutes or until mixture is reduced by half. Whisk in whipping cream. Allow to simmer 3-4 minutes, whisking constantly, until slightly thickened; whisk in soy sauce and butter until butter is melted. Serve turkey topped with cream and wine sauce. Serves 4-6.

Note: Bone turkey breast or have butcher bone the breast.

FRIED SWEET POTATO PIES

- 4 ½ cups self-rising flour
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- ½ cup shortening
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup milk

Filling

- 3 cups mashed sweet potatoes
- 2 cups sugar
- 3 eggs, lightly beaten
- 1 can (5 ounces) evaporated milk
- ¼ cup butter or margarine, melted
- 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Oil for frying
Confectioners' sugar, optional

In a bowl, combine flour and sugar; cut in shortening until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Combine eggs and milk; add to crumb mixture, tossing with a fork until a ball forms. Cover and chill several hours. In a large bowl, combine the seven filling ingredients; stir until smooth. Divide the dough into 25 portions. On a floured surface, roll each portion into a 5-inch circle. Spoon 2 tablespoons of filling on half of each circle. Moisten edges with water; fold dough over filling and press edges with a fork to seal. Prick tops with a fork 4-5 times.

In an electric skillet, heat ½ inch of oil to 375 degrees. Fry pies, a few at a time, for 1 minute on each side or until golden brown. Drain on paper towels. Dust with confectioners' sugar if desired. Store in refrigerator. Yield: 25 pies.

FESTIVE CRANBERRY SALAD

- 1 can (14 ounces) sweetened condensed milk
- ¼ cup lemon juice
- 1 can (20 ounces) crushed pineapple, drained
- 1 can (16 ounces) whole-berry cranberry sauce
- 2 cups miniature marshmallows
- ½ cup chopped pecans

Red food coloring, optional
1 carton (8 ounces) frozen whipped topping, thawed

In a bowl, combine milk and lemon juice; mix well. Stir in the pineapple, cranberry sauce, marshmallows, pecans and food coloring if desired. Fold in whipped topping. Spoon into a 13-by-9-by-2-inch baking dish. Freeze until firm, 4 hours or overnight. Cut into squares. Yield: 12-16 servings.

Salad and pie recipes are by "Taste of Home" magazine. For a sample copy, send $2 to Taste of Home, Suite 4321, P.O. Box 990, Greendale WI 53129-0990. Visit the Web page at www.tasteofhome.com.

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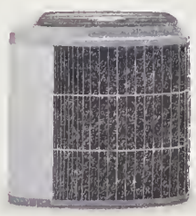

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